

THE
MORNING-LAND;

OR,

A THOUSAND AND ONE DAYS IN THE EAST.

BY FRIEDRICH BODENSTEDT.

FROM THE GERMAN

BY RICHARD WADDINGTON.

Second Series.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

LONDON:
RICHARD BENTLEY, NEW BURLINGTON STREET.
1853.

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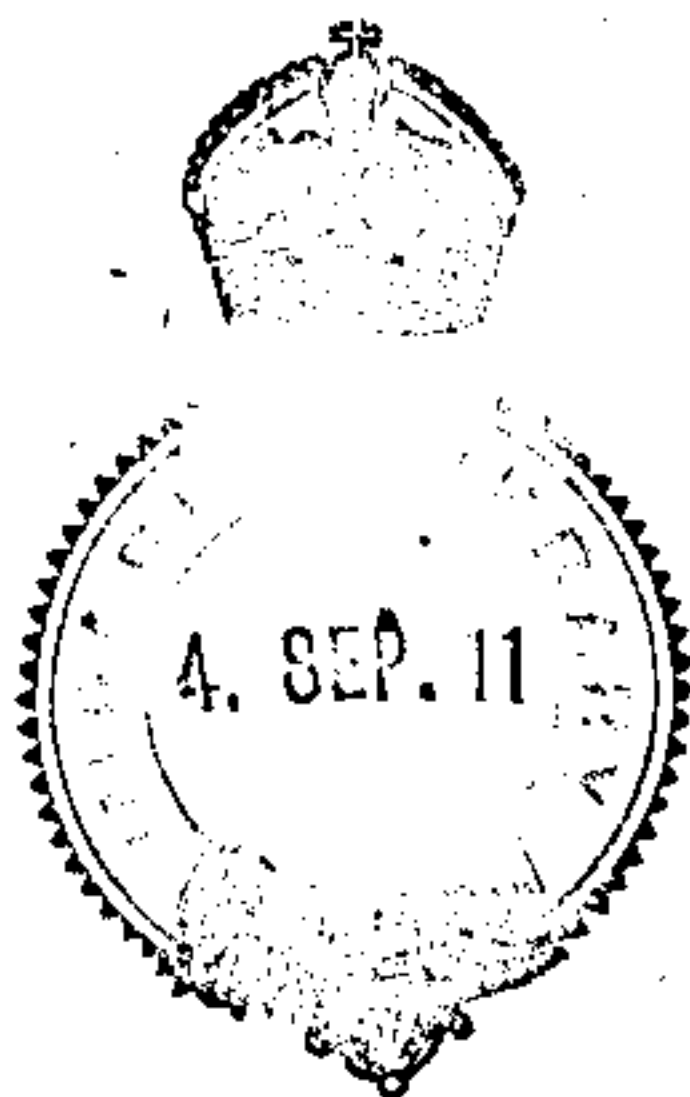
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LONDON: PRINTED BY WOODFALL AND KINDER,
ANGEL COURT, SKINNER STREET.

TO

BARON KARL OTTO,

OF THE MALSBURG, ESHEBERG,

ELECTORAL LORD-CHAMBERLAIN OF HESSE,

LIEUTENANT-COLONEL AUSSER DIENST,

ETC. ETC. ETC.,

THESE PAGES ARE INSCRIBED,

AS A TOKEN OF GRATEFUL REMEMBRANCE AND

UNALTERABLE FRIENDSHIP AND ESTEEM,

FROM HIS DEVOTED ADMIRER,

THE AUTHOR.

PROLOGUE

BY THE TRANSLATOR.

THESE volumes contain the translation of another work of Friedrich Bodenstedt, entitled in the German "Tausend und ein Tag im Orient. Fortsetzung und Schluss."

They form, therefore, a sequel to the "Morning Land."

New remembrances of a Thousand and One Days' tour in the countries between the Black and Caspian Seas follow each other in picturesque succession, and fresh flowers of Oriental poetry are entwined with the narrative.

The glimpses, especially, which it affords of the condition of the all but inaccessible Circassian tribes, who still maintain their heroic struggle against the Russians, and the introduction of

some of their fine national songs, which, being unfettered by rhyme, admit with ease of a pure and simple version, can scarcely fail to render this new work acceptable to English readers.

Moreover, according to promise, Mirza-Shaffy reappears in all his glory, to enlighten the Evening-Land. Whatever, also, may be thought of his sayings of wisdom and songs of love by the wise men of the West, the fair women will not fail to cast upon him the glance of satisfaction. Nor could the Wise Man of Gjändsha himself receive a more appropriate tribute than the favouring smiles of England's beautiful daughters !

• *Spring, 1853.*

PREFACE.

THE Prologue of the first part of the "Thousand and One Days" will serve for the second also, which, though likewise forming in itself a finished whole, is yet at the same time a continuation and completion of the first, and therefore requires no special introduction. But I cannot send this new book into the world, without expressing my grateful satisfaction at the friendly reception given to its unassuming predecessor by the press as well as by the public. That such men as Alexander von Humboldt, and the first living authorities in Oriental learning, such as Fleisher of Leipsig, Weil of Heidelberg, Petermann of Berlin, and others, should have shown a lively interest in my sketches of the Morning-Land, and partly in the press, partly in private intercourse, express themselves accordingly, sur-

passed my boldest expectations, and encouraged me to travel forward in the path I had chosen.

My intentions in the artistic structure of the little work, I find most aptly expressed in a review of the *Prussian Staatsanzeiger* (No. 34, February, 1850), where it says: "This is neither a book of travels, nor a strictly-scientific production, nor a collection of poems; but only somewhat of them all; essentially, however, an *actual piece of the Orient*."

More earnest labours having had continual claim upon me, I could only devote my leisure hours to the writing down of these narrations, the story of whose origin is connected with two of the most momentous occurrences of the present age.

The first part originated amid the confusion of that October-revolution of Vienna, in the blooming time of Prince Windishgrätz and similar heroes. The commencement of the second part dates from the land where Hassenpflug and his associates began to spin the web of misfortune, that now holds fast in its entanglements the noble-minded Hessians, and, in all proba-

bility, will involve the whole of Germany in a portentous civil war. Although this book has nothing intrinsically to do with politics, having been written by way of refreshment from my political labours, yet I cannot resist the impulse of giving utterance here to feelings that now flame through every German heart—feelings of high admiration for the brave Hessians, and of deep abhorrence for Hassenpflug, and all high and low abettors of his infamy.

Written at BERLIN, 15th November, 1850.

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THOUSAND AND ONE DAYS

IN

THE EAST.

CHAPTER I.

GURIA.

ONCE again — before we enter on our final voyage, and coast along to the warlike races of the Dzhigeth and Shapszuch—I lead you back into the shades of the forests of Colchis.

I know not how to devise a comparison adequate to the realization of this majestic world of plants; for neither before nor since have I seen a similar abundance, size, and freshness of vegetable forms.

At the sight of giant oaks, beeches, and

alders, home remembrances rush vividly through us; the large-leaved chestnut trees vault over us like cupolas of green mosques; and the shining silver poplars rise aloft like steeples from the sanctuary of woods. The cherry-laurel, the myrtle, and regular walls of medlar bushes and box-trees, press forwards even to the sea. On to the very pinnacles of the highest trees the rampant vine upcurls, and hangs its long tendrils down, like straggling meshes of the verdant network that entwines the whole of this primeval forest. Lianas, hops, ivy, in short climbing and parasitical plants of all descriptions, the diplomatists of the forest, creep from tree to tree, from twig to twig, robbing the soil of its richest strength, only to intertwist and entangle all things with inextricable confusion. Neither the sturdy oak, nor the mighty beech, nor the earnest laurel, nor the modest myrtle, can disengage itself from the embraces of these luxuriant wooers.

Here reigns for ever a wild pell-mell, a universal encroaching and crowding; so that, as naturalists maintain, many trees die away before

their time, exhausted by the rioting climbers that cling to them for support.

Seldom does the foot of man tread the interior of these pathless woods; where, by day, there is nought to be heard but the chirping and singing of birds, while, at night, innumerable jackals raise their dismal howls.

Nature has here become the prodigal, but no one draws advantage from her lavishness, and only a few have joy therein. Nowhere more than here do the tasteful verses of Young find confirmation, where he says of Nature:—

“ In distant wilds, by human eye unseen,
She rears her flowers, and spreads her velvet green;
Pure gurgling rills the lonely desert trace,
And waste their music on the savage race.”

Often, in the midst of this exuberant world of plants, did I vividly call to mind the distant north, where industry toils hard to raise, in stunted specimens, what here, untended by the hand of man, flourishes in such wanton profusion.

Yet, methinks, those lands are happier far,

where man laboriously extracts from nature, in the sweat of his brow, what brings him advantage and joy, than this Colchian land of wonders, with its ever-verdant groves, where no mortal tastes the blessings which the earth affords: for this country, notwithstanding its natural wonders, is a waste; and its inhabitants, notwithstanding their physical beauty, are a starved race.

* * * * *

There, where the Colchian vegetation unfolds in wildest pomp and abundance, between the Rion and the Tsholok, lies Guria, a little province adorned with all the charms of nature, and whose inhabitants have for ages been esteemed the most beautiful of the Kartvelshian race*¹.

The history of this little province only connects with the names of the foreign conquerors to whom, as far as our knowledge reaches back, it has always been subject. The people, therefore, notwithstanding they possess the happiest natural dispositions, have never been able to attain a substantial self-development. For where

* These figures refer to the Appendix.

political independence and the security of property are wanting, civilization and prosperity are impossible.

The entire extent of territory, once belonging to Guria, but now divided among the Turks and Russians, was known in remote antiquity as the land of *Æthiopia*; in after times, from the dominant priestly caste, it acquired the name of *Colchis*; and lastly, from the Lazian race, that of *Lazia*, or *Lazica*².

For a long time, the rulers of Guria, too powerless to defend the country from foreign attacks, and only serving to exhaust the energies of the people, maintained a certain show of sovereignty; until, in the year 1810, the last Gurriel*, Mamia, driven by necessity, submitted himself to the Russians. His aspiring consort, Sophia, afterwards made some fruitless attempts to regain, with the help of the Turks, the independence of her little province. These endeavours, however, only served to strengthen the Russian supremacy; and the war between Russia and the Porte, so

* The title borne by the princes or governors of Guria, and derived from the name of the country.

unfortunate in its issue for the Turks, ended also in Guria's becoming the permanent possession of the Czar.

The whole country contains, on an area of 1800 square versts, only 18,000 male inhabitants; the entire amount of its population (women and children, *i. e.* included, who, as is well known, are not comprehended in the Russian census) would therefore not exceed the population of such a city as Brunswick.

The ruins, scattered throughout the country, and belonging to the Persian and Roman times, afford abundant material for interesting archaeological investigations; the pursuit of which, however, during a lengthened residence, is always attended with danger, since in no part of the Caucasus are deadly fevers and liver-complaints so frightfully prevalent as here.

The excellent Dubois de Montpéreur has the merit of having given the most copious account of the antiquities of Guria. Of all foreign travellers, the most friendly in sentiment towards the Russians, he cannot, however, refrain from making bitter reproaches on the Government, for

sacrificing so many human beings here annually to the ravages of the climate.

"Never," says Dubois, speaking of the fortress of Poti, "had a garrison to contend with so infernal a climate. The soldiers, confined in the damp delta between the Rion and the stagnant lake Paleastom, in the neighbourhood of the pestiferous canal Nadorta, and of the still more pestiferous woods extending between the lake and the sea; encircled on all sides by the standing morasses of Nebada and Pitshora-Moltavska; poisoned by a fever-bringing tainted air, from whatever quarter the wind might blow; fell like leaves which the winter wind carries away. Typhus fevers thinned with terrific speed the ranks of these unfortunate men. In spite of this, the Government has had the hardihood to settle down a company of married soldiers, as a colony, just along the canal coming from lake Paleastom,—along that canal whose waters are so foul and putrid, that every living creature, fish or crab, that finds its way into them, dies and strews the banks. I shall never forget the sensation excited in me by that military colony,

as I passed through it about the middle of October. I and my servant turned our eyes away, so as not to see those sepulchral figures, those pale livid women and children; so much did the sight of them pierce our hearts."

My residence in Guria was of very short duration, but from all I have seen and heard of the ravages of the climate, I can only confirm Dubois' account, which is equally applicable to all other parts of the country. In Ossurgethi, the principal place and seat of the government of Guria, where the naturalist Ssovitsh sowed the seeds of his early death, I was myself confined with a bilious fever.

If the Emperor of Russia would issue his commands that the same number of men who yearly lose their lives by the useless war in the ravines of the Caucasus, should be employed in draining these swamps and morasses, in clearing these forests, and in alluring from Nature her here everywhere hidden treasures; then might these maritime countries be changed in a few years into a Paradise, and the inhabitants be more closely and lastingly bound to the Musco-

vite land, than the sword and the rude hand of power will ever constrain them to be.

The greater part of my residence at Ossurgethi was spent in intercourse with a Pole, who had lived in banishment thirteen years, and whom destiny, in the shape of a Russian colonel, had then brought for a short time to Guria, on affairs of service.

Our conversation chiefly turned on the circumstances of the empire, and L. was enabled to relate, from his plentiful experience, a multitude of passages affording me many fresh disclosures of the gigantic land, which I myself had traversed for years from one end to the other.

I had occasion again, in my new Polish acquaintance, to remark a circumstance which had frequently obtruded itself on my notice in previous intercourse with his countrymen, viz. that the Poles, even such as have found in Russia nothing but misery and misfortune, always speak with a sympathy and kindred feeling of the mass of the *Russian people*, whilst the expressions of their hatred and revenge are directed only against the Emperor and his counsellors.

And, as my firm conviction, I must declare—a conviction grounded on several years of observation—that if Russia and Germany should ever come to war, the Poles, even with full freedom of choice, would unconditionally side *with* Russia and *against* Germany.

CHAPTER II.

A LINGUISTICAL DIGRESSION.

As the members of the notorious Slavonian Congress of Prague (1848), after many fruitless endeavours to find a Slavonian medium of communication, saw themselves at last obliged to have recourse to the German language, the language of the people concerning whose mental superiority that mediæval Shrovetide tourney was to be held,—so we (the Pole and I) conversed in the Russian language, the language of the people whom our critical remarks concerned.

L., during his long banishment, had pretty well forgotten German and French, and the language of his hereditary foes had become his most familiar tongue; as for me, I gladly availed myself of the opportunity of using Russian again, the acquisition of which had cost me so much trouble.

The longer I have lived in foreign countries, the clearer has my conviction grown, that the peculiarities of language everywhere stand in closest connection with the peculiarities of national character; and that the knowledge of the one is always incomplete without the knowledge of the other.

A full elucidation of this assertion would require a book for itself; but for these little narrations, which are intended to be rather suggestive than exhaustive, a few examples may suffice.

The Frenchman, notwithstanding his frequently excessive politeness, and the Englishman, notwithstanding his aristocratical propension, have, for the most part, only one common designation for each of the various requirements of the human body; whereas the submissive style of expression characteristic of the German and still more of the Russian language, strictly distinguishes between master and servant, between rank and insignificance.

For example, it would be deemed an arrant offence in a Russian *valet de chambre*, if he were to say "my master is asleep;" he employs, for this purpose, the word "potshiwatj," which

answers pretty nearly to our German "ruhen" (repose). In like manner, the terms *eating*, *drinking*, and so forth, are figuratively avoided, as too common for people of rank. We have no corresponding words exactly equivalent to these Russian expressions; yet the contrast is not less marked than in the Russian, when we say in German, *der Diener iszt—der Herr speisen*; *der Diener schläft—der Herr schlafen*, &c. (the servant is eating, sleeping, &c.).

Another linguistical practice, exclusively common to the Russians and Germans, may here be mentioned: I mean the habit, never enough to be censured, of the needless use of foreign words.

It is well known that precisely those persons who understand the least of foreign languages are the most accustomed to disfigure their own language by the use of foreign expressions. With respect to Germany, this brief indication will suffice for general intelligibility; but in reference to Russia, the citation of a few examples may be both novel and entertaining.

I could often scarcely credit my senses, when, on the banks of the Don or Volga, in conversa- •

tion with people who take a middle position between the saloon of the Bojar and the isba (cottage) of the serf, I was startled by the sound now of German, now of French expressions, making as strange a figure in their Russian masking as a sandalled Russian peasant in a dress-coat. *Früshtikatj*, to breakfast, from the German *frühstücken*;—*vojazhirovatj*, to travel, from *voyager*;—*marshirovatj*, to march, from *marschiren*;—*buntovatj*, *buntovatsse*, to unite, from *verbünden*, &c.

Now let any one imagine these words conjugated in the Russian manner. Thus, *Ja budu früshtikatj*, I shall breakfast;—*Ja vojazhirovall*, I have travelled.

These and similar expressions sound to cultivated ears as comical in Russian, as if we were to talk of *recherchirten expressionen*, *malheuren evenements*, *espèce von dings da*, and the like.

The case is different with words that came into the country with the objects themselves which they signify, and thus obtained their right of citizenship; or with those that have no correspond-

ing terms in Russian. Against words, for instance, like *Exercirgaus*, *Exercirhaus* (parade-house); *Schlachba-um*, *Schlagbaum* (turnpike); *Krushtall*, *Krystall* (crystal), the most inveterate Russian has nothing to object.

In the Cossack language, we are able, from the national songs and annals, chronologically to ascertain the period when certain foreign words found their way over Poland into the Ukraine.

Whilst the Greater Russians or Moscovites, regularly change the *h*, which is wanting in their language, into a *g* (*Gaus*, *Haus*), the Lesser Russians or Ukrainians, invariably alter our *w* into an *m*. For example, from the German “*wandern*,” comes the Ukrainian “*mandrovati*.” Other words occur again almost in their original forms, as *spiss*, from *spiesz*, a spear; *papir*, from *papier*, paper; *rjatovati*, from *retten*, to rescue, &c.

The occasion of this linguistical digression was given by the first questions put to me by the Pole—“Where did you learn Russian?” I then noted down in my journal a remark, which I had frequently made in Russian before, on the

peculiar manner in which the Russian expresses "learn." He has for this the word *wuyutshitj*, which, literally translated, signifies *auslernen* (to learn out—to learn completely). The father causes his children to learn English, French, German, &c., *out*; the gymnasiast, the seminarist, learns history, theology, philosophy, &c., *out*.

This peculiar expression stands neither alone nor accidental there: it corresponds with a method of conception quite as peculiar to the Russians of knowledge in general.

A Russian prince and senator, with whom I had previously contracted a friendship at Moscow, was quite at a loss what to say when he heard that I was studying history still, nor could his consort satisfy herself with such an idea. Wherefore does one learn history, but to pass his examination? The children of the prince had accomplished that at their sixteenth year, so that history and everything else had been "learned out." But to think of an earnest man, past the first quarter-century of his life, studying history still!

Hence it is easily comprehensible how the Russian word *nakasanije* signifies at once *punishment* and *instruction*.

A high-born young Russian goes through his time of instruction or punishment, not for the sake of learning anything, but in order to climb the first step in the ladder of civil honours. From the purgatory of the school he attains to the paradise of the Government.

Such and similar remarks, interchanged between the banished Pole and myself, had given a cheerful turn to the conversation, and put us both into good spirits.

"Heaven knows," said the Pole, "how it happens that I can now laugh over an event which belongs to the most unfortunate occurrences of my life, and which gave to an already disastrous lot a still more disastrous turn.

"You know that after eleven years' service as a common soldier, I was appointed, through the mediation of Colonel G., to the situation of teacher in the School of Cantonists at E.

"If this engagement afforded me in other respects but little pleasure, it nevertheless had an

advantageous influence on my health, for intercourse with youth is always somewhat freshening. By degrees I became quite fond of my employment. But it stood written in the book of fate, that I should nowhere find an abiding lot.

“Soon after General S. had arrived at Tiflis as Chief of the System of Instruction for the Transcaucasian provinces, he visited my school, during his first tour of inspection; and from the high-flown manner in which he snarled at me and my pupils, I soon perceived that his visit would be followed by no agreeable results.

“I had already experienced too much disaster in my life to be violently alarmed at the harsh demeanour of the General; even the grimaces which he made on hearing my Polish name did not greatly disconcert me.

“Nevertheless, he became more snappish and irritable at every word, according to the old rule that hot heads always grow more furious the more serenity one opposes to them, and that the coarse insolence of a man always stands on a level with his ignorance.

““Now, what do the youths learn here?’ be-

gan the Deputy Minister of Public Enlightenment, by way of examination, after having observed, with a truly rabid expression of countenance, that no fault was to be found with the dress of the scholars, and the arrangements of the school-room.

“I gave to this old-established question the old-established answer; he did not allow me, however, to finish speaking, but struck in with a consequential look, ‘Russian is the principal thing! That must be seen to before all! Give me a pupil who has been properly taught Russian, and I will warrant him to learn everything else of himself.’

“Of course I did not venture to contradict him, and replied that no efforts were wanting on my part to instruct my pupils properly in Russian. . . .

“‘We shall see,’ cried the General; ‘just show me your best scholar.’

“I did as I was ordered; but unfortunately my best scholar was not a Russian, but an Armenian, by name Akimijan.

“This accidental circumstance gave the Gene-

ral the wished-for occasion of pouring forth a flood of abusive words to the effect that I kept the young Russians in the background, and gave the preference to the representatives of the subjected races.

“You may easily imagine that the behaviour of the Deputy Minister of Public Enlightenment had no very encouraging influence on the poor scholar.

“Timid and trembling, Akimijan stepped forward.

“‘Now, just make him write something on the board,’ were the commands of his Excellency to me.

“Akimijan took the chalk at my direction, and wrote, ‘The eye is an organ of the human body.’

“The sentence was correctly written; there was nothing to be said against it.

“‘Well, now go on,’ signified his Excellency to me.

“‘What sort of a word is *oko* (the eye)?’ I asked the scholar.

“‘A noun,’ sobbed the poor lad.

“ ‘ Right, my son, don’t be afraid. His Excellency (in Russian, Jewo Wuyssokoprewosshoditelstwo) will do thee no harm. Now tell me, what gender is oko ?’

“ ‘ Neuter gender.’

“ ‘ Quite right ! now—’

“ ‘ What ! quite right ! neuter gender ! Sslawnuij shtuk ! A pretty story !’ exclaimed the General, violently interrupting us, ‘ what nonsense is this that you’re teaching the youths ? The eye neuter gender ? . . . Have not I eyes, and my wife too ? Is not the eye both masculine and feminine ? How can the eye be neuter gender ?’

“ The eyes of the Deputy Minister of Public Enlightenment darkened in the most ominous manner, and a flood of abuse was again poured forth upon me, such as only can stream from the mouth of a Russian of this stamp.

“ The end of the matter was, that I had to quit the school-room, and march again into rank and file. It was proved to demonstration, that I had bewildered the heads of the young people, and was fit for nothing but field-service.”

The German narrator must here add, by way of completion, that Russian Generals and Public Enlighteners of this description are certainly still to be met with, but that their number is daily diminishing.

Among the Russian officers of the line, of lower and middle rank, education is of course as rare, on the average, as honesty among the civil functionaries; the great majority of Russian staff-officers, on the contrary, are inferior neither in education nor in social forms to the staff-officers of other lands.

CHAPTER III.

THE HORSE AND THE TWO BEAUTIES.

THE times are over, when Colchis used to send its annual tribute of beautiful virgins to the Harem of the Padishah of the Faithful; and as long as the Russian Czar wears the crown of Georgia among the hundred crowns of his empire, those times will never return, however much the Sunnites may complain that their Sultan is deprived of the fairest, old-established love-offering of the Beiram*—the Dur Gjirdzhistanen, the Pearls of Georgia.

* Beiram, a feast of the Moslemin, similar to our Easter. It follows immediately after Ramazan, or Fast-month, and lasts three days. The Beiram begins as soon as new moon is announced by the wise men appointed for the purpose. As a movable feast, it has the peculiarity, in the course of thirty-three years, of falling in all the seasons and months of the year, the Turks reckoning by lunar years.

But from the provinces on the eastern coast, and especially from Guria, a multitude of pretty maidens are still secretly conveyed across to Anatolia, where, at the market of Trebizond, they either at once find lovers and purchasers, or else a safe opportunity of further progress to Stamboul, the last and highest object of their wishes. From Poti, or St. Nicholas, the nearest places on the coast to Trebizond is only a trifling distance for skilful rowers; a single night suffices, on the light beak-pointed kajiks of the Greek coasters, or even on the little barkasses of the Cossacks, to run through the short expanse of sea. And of pretty maidens, ready and willing for the adventurous passage, there is never any deficiency.

* * * * *

My host in Ossurgethi had two daughters, the elder of whom was named Nino, and the second, if I mistake not, Thamar. Both, although in form and feature essentially different, were so graceful a pair of creatures, that they might have vied in beauty with the stateliest daughters of the Adighe.

Nino, a tall, slender, cypress-like figure, with delicate hands and feet, small mouth and ears, and adorned with a dark growth of hair, luxuriant and long enough to entangle in its glossy wreaths a dozen inexperienced men at once.

She was a woman born for dominion. In her large, black eyes, delicate, close-pressing lips, and slightly arched, boldly-delineated nose, there lay a decidedly masculine expression. In women of this order, love always plays only a subordinate part.

Thamar, the younger sister, had not so strikingly beautiful a form as Nino; she was smaller fuller in shape, and less regular in her features; but irresistibly charming and feminine in her whole appearance. The somewhat too large mouth was compensated for by the rosy lips and the healthy, snow-white teeth, with their soft enamel.

The colour of her countenance, of her full throat and neck, was of transparent clearness. She had, what one so seldom finds united, heaven-blue eyes, with long dark-silken eyelashes, and shining black hair.

I found myself, with respect to these two beautiful creatures, in the right position for an impartial judge. My heart was elsewhere engaged, and its mortal coil was so plagued with bilious fever, that I had sensibility for anything rather than a love-adventure.

In addition to this, my supply of cash was getting exhausted; so that, above all things, I had to think of reaching Odessa as soon as possible, in order to negotiate with Herr Consul Bellino an exchange in gold; for throughout the entire woods of Colchis, not a soul perhaps could have given me, for a bill of two hundred ducats, so much as two hundred kopeks. And a pecuniary embarrassment, in uncivilized provinces of a foreign part of the world, is not to be reckoned among the slightest embarrassments of life.

Notwithstanding this, I had great delight in the daughters of my host; for pretty maidens, like a clear sky and fragrant flowers, invariably exert, on the suffering, as on the healthful, a wholesome enchantment.

I may here interweave a remark, which has often been forced upon me in the lands of the

south, that there, even among the daughters of the poorest and lowest classes of the people, one never finds that awkward and angular stiffness of movement which exists among us. Place one of the humblest daughters of these lands on a royal throne, and, in attitude and gesture, she will not deny the queen.

I had commissioned Giorgi to find a purchaser for my riding-horse, a splendid animal, presented to me by Prince Andronikov. It was hard to bring myself to part with the faithful beast, and I would rather have taken him with me as a memorial to Europe, had not the transport been connected with insurmountable difficulties.

At that time there was no regular communication on the Black Sea; in the most fortunate case, I should have been able to convey the horse on a Russian war-boat to the Crimea, and thence by Odessa to Constantinople. But gladly as I would have borne all the expenses attending this procedure, in the certainty that my steed would have arrived in good condition at the place of his destination, as little could I, under the existing circumstances, determine on so doing.

On the one hand, it was very doubtful whether a war-boat could have been found ready for the transport of the horse; and, on the other, still more doubtful whether the horse could have made the journey without danger. For the Russian war-boats do not cruize upon the Black Sea for their own amusement, but for the purpose of giving chase to the Turkish slave-vessels that carry Circassian maidens to Stamboul.

Taking all these things, therefore, into consideration, I thought it most prudent to dispose of the horse in Guria, although I knew beforehand, that in this poor country no high price would be given for it.

On the evening of the self-same day on which I had commissioned Giorgi to look about for a purchaser, the cunning Armenian came into the room, where I lay on my carpet sunk in a reverie, and said, "Aga, I have found my man, and Insh Allah! (please God!) you will be satisfied with the purchase-price."

"Who is the purchaser?" I inquired.

"Our kunak" (host), answered Giorgi.

"Dolu!" (stupid fellow!) I cried, and angrily

drew my hand across my forehead; for a more disagreeable purchaser than our host, Giorgi could not possibly have brought me. According to Asiatic usage, I should be obliged to make him a present of the horse out and out, or, at all events, to make it over to him for a mere trifle.

Giorgi endeavoured to pacify me. Why, he had thought of anything but bargaining to my disadvantage. In this country, where the people themselves had so little to give, and strangers were as rare as money, the habit of making presents was not so much indulged in, and the old "Bu begjanerem!" (this pleases me,) and "Alsen!" (take it then,) were not quite so frequent.

"What will the kunak give, then, for the horse?" I interrupted Giorgi.

His face relaxed to a triumphing smile, as he fixed his sly look on me, and answered, "Nino!"

"Fellow, what the deuce do you mean?" I hotly rejoined.

He did not, however, allow himself to be put out of countenance. With the expression in his face continually brightening, as if with certain victory, he proceeded:

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“Do you think I have struck the bargain, then, Aga? Am I a Kasviner* who loses his ass, and thanks God that he has not lost himself? Hamdu lillah! God be praised! I am not that! I said to our host: ‘Friend!’ said I,

* Kasvin plays about the same part in Persia as Schöpenstedt, or Krähwinkel in Germany. The allusion of Giorgi is founded on the following Kasviniad:

’Tis related of the town Kasvin,

That it was for sheer fools famous ever;

Never man, they say, was born therein,

But in foolishness he soon grew clever!

Through the town bazaar once, loud exclaiming,

A Kasviner ran with joyous face,

Praising Allah’s goodness, and proclaiming

That his ass was lost and gone for ever;

But that he, the beast, had ne’er bestriden!

Wherefore praisest God, inquired another,

That thou never on the ass hast ridden?

Was the ass then to be ridden never?

Just because, replied that man of men,

If upon the ass I had been seated

At the time when he was lost, why then,

Sure we now had both been lost together!

‘for whom dost thou take my master, that thou thinkest he will give this horse away for Nino? If my master sells his horse, he must, at least, have both the maidens for him, Nino and Thamar!’ Mark me, Aga, *at least* both the maidens! He has not yet agreed, but let me no longer be an Adam (man), let me become a donkey, if you do not get both the maidens for this horse. What do you say now, Aga?” finished Giorgi, smirkingly.

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I forbear describing the feelings which the droll fellow’s proposal excited in me; the attempt, however, at such a description, would be a very confused and imperfect one.

A traveller who has made his first studies in the knowledge of men and peoples in Russia, where the fate of so many millions of human beings, of the most dissimilar races, manners, and civilization, depends on the will of a single individual, and the white-slave trade is not one of the most evil-looking facts of the day, finds it naturally less surprising than will appear to the majority of his friendly readers, to see a father

offering his own two daughters as the purchase-price of a horse.

Instead now of coquetting with fine feelings, I will rather seek to explain to you the causes of so melancholy a state of things.

For centuries, the peoples of the Kartvelshian race, to which the Gurians also belong, have lived in dependence on foreign powers; having been subdued successively by the Tartars, the Persians, the Turks, and the Russians; so that all traces of the earlier civilization, prosperity, and blooming time of Georgia—nay, even the memory of Thamar and Davith, the most renowned rulers of these lands—became effaced.

Commerce, trade, and agriculture, came into decay; the inhabitants, accustomed to see themselves abused as will-less tools of the foreign oppressors of the country, sank into idleness and stupidity; all the motive-springs of self-assertion and development having ceased to play.

No one strove for riches, for he who had much was obliged to give much. No one strove for distinction, for the going over to Islam was the first condition of obtaining authority and power;

and the tribes of Kartvel, through all the sufferings and oppression of many centuries, even to the present day, have remained true to the faith of their fathers.

As then, in general, the Christian population of these regions, even up to the table-land of Ararat, played the same part with respect to their Islamitish oppressors, as the Jews in Europe against their Christian persecutors; so the curse that, here in the West, fell upon the Children of Israel, by the hands of the bloodthirsty apostles of the gentle doctrines of Jesus, was wreaked on the oldest and most devoted followers of the Christian faith, to the tenth and twelfth generation.

If one were to number the sum of the periods of oppression under which the peoples of Kartvel and Haighk * have groaned, the time which forms the framework of this bloody web of suffering would be found to compass more than a thousand years.

Destroyed are the fire-temples of the Parsees, destroyed the monuments and buildings of the

* Georgians and Armenians.

Romans, destroyed the palaces and churches of the Georgians and Byzantines, which once adorned the ever-verdant woods of Colchis; and with the fall of these memorials of art, the taste of the people for the arts of peace is fallen too.

These strokes of fate always fell the hardest on those parts of the country that lay most remote from the centres of power and intercourse, *i. e.* from the capital cities. Guria was one of those most unfortunate branches of the Kartvelshian race.

Hence the wildness of the country; hence the idleness, the relaxation, the degeneracy of its inhabitants.

Men, who for centuries had been used to see the fairest maidens carried off from their midst to the harems of the Turks or Persians, could not fail by degrees to become blunted to such proceedings.

We have already on a former occasion extolled the beauty of the maidens of Guria. Many of these maidens, who, in their fatherland, had spent a pleasureless, sorrowful youth, and had thence been led by destiny into the harems

of Islamitish grandees, have returned in a few years, laden with presents, to their native homes, and there enjoyed the influence and distinction that riches everywhere obtain.

Thus the rivalries and aspirings of other maidens became quickened to attain to similar influence and distinction. The only road to these lay through the harem.

So then, it soon happened that there was no longer any need at all of compelling the maidens to seek their fortune abroad, but that rather a positive urgency and formal emulation arose among them, to be embarked for Trebizond or Constantinople, and bought by a Vizier or Pasha.

It needs hardly be said how little such a relation corresponds with the tender claims which we are accustomed to yield to the conjugal union; but it must be remarked that neither in the East are those conjugal barbarities to be met with, which, among us, make many a poor woman's home a hell.

If, in the East, woman does not enjoy that high admiration and esteem which have gone forth to

her from the forests of Germany, and in England has found its highest expression, yet she is never subjected there to that rude treatment which is not one of the rarest occurrences with us.

The Moslem is too proud to treat a woman ill; he knows nothing of that mean, cowardly spirit which only displays itself within its own four walls, and lets a defenceless woman suffer for whatever evil the world engenders in it.

Should a Turkish grandee conceive a permanent dislike to his chosen lady, he takes to himself another, and dismisses the first with presents, or is otherwise careful of her comforts. It is a command of the Koran and of humanity, and is hardly ever transgressed.

In this certainty of seeing their daughters (according to the customary notions of the country) well provided for, the parents not only place no difficulties in their way, but are even themselves solicitous of securing their reception into a harem.

If a maiden can conclude a comfortable marriage in her own country in accordance with Christian usage, she will always thereby cause

greater joy to her kindred than when she seeks an adventurous fortune abroad.

I have never heard of a father in this country compelling his daughter, or a brother his sister, to confide her destiny to the bark of a slave-trader; but if the maidens themselves cherish longings that way, the purchase-price of the fair emigrants will always be welcome to their kindred, for the amelioration of their own necessitous lot.

It is well known that the Russians, as well in the provinces subjected to their sway, as in the hostile Caucasian countries, endeavour to set all possible limits to the exportation of human beings; how far, however, this proceeds from moral or Christian motives may easily be settled, when one knows that a good Karabaghian horse, according to the usual money-worth, outvalues in Russia, not two, but six, of these beautiful maidens.

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The above remarks appeared to me to be necessary, in order to place the reader at the right point of view for a just appreciation of the subject.

That Guria, as well as the whole Caucasian region, requires a mighty civilizing influence for its elevation and improvement, no reasonable man will doubt; but that precisely Russia is called and qualified to exert such a wholesome influence, every reasonable man will doubt, whose personal interests are not all too closely allied with the Russian.

We now proceed with our story.

I signified very decisively to Giorgi, that nothing could come of his transaction, and furnished him with the only reasons likely to have weight in his eyes—namely, that my supply of money was considerably on the wane, and would with difficulty hold out for us both, until we reached Odessa, if we lived sparingly; to say nothing then of what would be the consequence if a pair of maidens, who, before everything, must be richly attired, should follow in our train.

Moreover, I represented to him the danger which threatened us from the Russians, if we should attempt to conduct the maidens into the Turkish territory.

No further arguments were required by Giorgi;

for he was so afraid of danger, that the mere word was enough to throw him into consternation.

For the rest, the failure of his negotiation seemed to have put him sadly out of spirits; "Aman! aman!" (Alas! alas!) he cried time after time, until the conjecture was inevitably forced upon me, that he had not employed his commission exclusively with a view to *my* interest.

But still more than by the bad success of his negotiation was he confounded by my confession that the money was coming to an end. This he could not at all understand. My purse had been deemed by him as inexhaustible as his wit.

"I wonder where all the money is gone to?" he inquired, shaking his head.

"*That* thou must know best thyself," I replied; "for it has all gone through thy hands! Who would have thought of finding such expensive living in these impoverished countries? Didst thou not swear to me by thy head, when we made our last reckoning together, and I was astonished at the high prices, that thou hadst had to

pay to the Greek merchants, at Redut-Kalé, a ducat for every fowl because it was Easter? Instead of telling me before, so as to have rendered another arrangement possible, thou art come with thy lamentations long after the expensive fowls have all been consumed! Hast thou not put to my account two abbas* for the washing of every shirt? and have not all my shirts, according to this account, been oftener washed than worn? Is it a wonder, then, if the money runs through the fingers, like water through a sieve?"

Giorgi stared at me like one stupified, without answering a word; and then, going backwards, and fastening his eyes alternately on the floor and on me, with slow strides left the room.

It was already late in the evening; I threw over me a light dressing gown that served me for coverlet in the warm summer-nights, retained my wide red silk trowsers, and laid me down to sleep; after having, according to my wont in these regions, where lock and bar are still among the rarest articles of luxury, stationed something against the door, so that the noise of its falling

* A Georgian silver coin, worth twenty copper kopeks.

down, on the opening of the door, might easily awaken me.

It was long before I could find the rest I so much needed.

In the first place, through the openings, void of glass or trellis, in the wall above, a pair of birds flew in, and whirred about the room for a length of time, until I succeeded, by dint of hissing and flinging, in scaring them away.

Scarcely had I closed my eyes again, when I was awakened afresh by something striking me in the face: it was a little piece of loam, crumbled loose from above by a young cat, which, as I opened my eyes, was just in the act of descending the wall. The moonlight night, fortunately, rendered it possible for me to discover and remove the cause of my disturbance.

But I was fated to have no lasting rest that night. An hour, perhaps, might have passed since I had happily expelled the cat and sunk into a deep sleep, when I was once more roused by a loud tumbling at the door.

I sprang up in a rage; seized, in drunken sleepiness, on my pistol; and who shall de-

scribe my astonishment, as a tall female figure, clothed like a spirit, in white raiment, steps towards me, sinks down before me, and conjures me not to abandon her.

It was Nino, the daughter of my host. She had learned from Giorgi the failure of the plan of purchase, and had, therefore, come herself to make a last attempt to persuade me to take her with me.

That, in doing so, she lavished on me a profusion of moving words and loving sentiments, lay in the nature of the case. I must add, that she used her power of language with admirable skill, and knew how to give to her sweet expressions in a high degree the appearance of sincerity.

All my objections and evasions were quickly set aside by fitting replies.

I admired and praised the natural eloquence of the maiden, but remained not the less firm in my refusal.

With a very delicate turn Nino gave me at last to understand that she did not care at all for the possession of the horse ; I might sell him where I would, if I only gave my consent to fly

away with her in secret, and take her heart in my hand. And if she should not succeed in awakening in me a spark of affection for her, I should still be free to sell her at Trebizond or Constantinople. With a mixture of conscious pride, she gave me, moreover, to understand, that the purchase-price for such a beauty, in those cities, would be none of the smallest.

However much these material views displeased me, and however much in general the demeanour of Nino went against my feelings, I was yet so charmed by the beauty of the maiden of perfect form, that, for a moment, I really felt my resolution wavering. But the struggle was only a short one.

And I must give truth her due, and confess, that if I could have resolved to take with me one of the two lovely beings, not Nino, but Thamar, her less beautiful sister, would have been my choice.

So then, they both remained behind ; and, two days later, I left Osurgethi, having sold the horse, through the agency of the Pole, for a small sum.

But I must not anticipate the course of things; before my departure I had still a little addition to make to my experience, the non-mention of which would be a sin of omission.

Of this in the next chapter.

CHAPTER IV.

GIORGI AND CHRISTIANITY IN RUSSIA.

It was the evening before my departure from Osurgethi. Giorgi was packing up my things and I was making preparations for tea, a duty I had always performed myself ever since Giorgi, on one occasion, in our tour through the Pashalic of Achalzich, had put Persian insect powder, by mistake, into the teapot, and strewn the precious tea on the bed to keep off my nightly assailants.

If the tea failed in its effect on the vermin, the powder, originally intended for them, was all the stronger in its effect on me; and, tormented inside and out, I had a horrible night of it.

Of course, I had remarked, at the time, that there was something peculiar about the tea, but

ascribed it at first to the strong infusion of rum, and only came by chance at the real cause.

But return we from this little digression back to our story.

Giorgi, engaged, as I have said, in packing up, exhibited an absence of mind and wore a face of submissive embarrassment, such as I had never seen the like of in him before. Every moment he made himself busy about my person, and then always looked at me with a perplexed expression, as if he had something heavy on his heart, but dare not bring it out.

I had taken the pot from the grate to pour out the tea, making use of my great travelling beaker for a cup, and was just in the act of raising the beverage to my lips, having placed the teapot, which was quite hot enough, on the table, when Giorgi rushed towards the fire-place, and with anxious rapidity set the pot again upon the grate.

"Aga, Aga! what have you done?" he cried in lamentable tone, "how many poor children's souls may the devil (sheitan) have burned on the grate already?"

If the man had been a problem to me all day long, I was farther than ever at that moment from knowing what to make of him.

“Giorgi, art thou in thy right senses?” I asked him sharply. “What hast thou to do with the teapot? why dost thou not keep to thy packing?”

Without any answer, he solemnly shook his head, and held the pot with his hand fast on the grate.

After many inquiries, I came at length to the bottom of the mystery, and learned (what, in Giorgi's estimation, every child was aware of) that, according to the superstition of the Armenians, an iron must never be laid across the fire without something upon it, because else the devil has the right of burning thereon the souls of children!

“How dost thou know this, then?” I further asked him, curious to investigate the origin of this strange superstition.

“You may depend upon it! you may depend upon it!” he cried, in evident embarrassment as to how he should bring respect for me into

harmony with my ignorance. "Why does the hare's tail produce sleep, when it is laid under the pillow of a child? why does the wolf's eye give courage to every one who carries it? who can lift the veil from the book of secrets? Let a woman apply wolf's grease, and she will become unfruitful, and her husband will never again stretch out to her the arm of desire; let her apply the gall of the wolf, and she will be blessed with offspring, and her husband will never become unfaithful. We know that it is so, but we know not why."

"I do not ask thee why it is so; I only ask thee how thou knowest it?"

"That is learned like eating and drinking. What one hears from one's father and mother is not easily forgotten again, not even if one roams as far about in the world as it has been my fate to do. The old women are not silent in Armenia; and if I were to tell you all I remember from childhood your patience would soon be gone in listening. Nay, truly, I was to have been myself a Wartabed (divine), but something prevented, and so I took to travelling, and have

continued travelling ever since. Good masters I have always found, and eating and drinking, and a spare penny too for my old age; but if I had known *that*, Aga, it should not have been. No, Aga, I really would not have done it, if I had known—”

“If thou hadst known what?” I asked with curiosity.

“That—do not be angry—that—you are not a rich man.”

The ice was broken, and in much freer tone he continued, with his wonted loquacity,—

“But I will give you it all back again gladly! I do not care for it. I cannot tell how I came to do so in your service, but such had been my custom in former times, when I always led a jolly life, whether I went to Teheran, Tauris, Moscow, or to the fair at Makariev (Nishny-Novgorod). My masters were rich merchants, who flung their money about; and the last especially, old Tomamshev of Tauris, was never very nice when he had done a good piece of business. I once earned three hundred silver rubles with the old gentleman, in one winter.”

“Three hundred silver rubles in one winter?”
I interrupted him, somewhat incredulous.

“Yes, sir; in one winter; and indeed in a single week!” he continued, in a very confident tone. “It was in the Masslenitza* at Moscow. My master, in company with other merchants, had been carousing at the great Traktir†, in the Maraseka‡ until a late hour in the night, and drinking more than was necessary.

“Skurjätin, an old merchant, who had to pay the score, was so mystified that he could scarcely stand on his legs; and my master found himself called upon to offer him a place in our sledge, in order to preserve him from the great unpleasantnesses to which persons in such a condition are exposed in Russian towns, through the police.

“The Iswoshtshik (coachman), who, while he

* Masslenitza—butter-week, as the week is called which precedes the great fasts of the Russians, and in which everywhere great excess prevails, especially among the commercial classes.

† Corrupted from the French *traiteur*, and corresponding with it in meaning.

‡ One of the principal streets in the heart of Moscow.

was waiting for us so long below, might also easily have had a glass too much ~~and~~ set his horses going at such a pace that, in the very beginning of our course, at a turn in the street near the Exchange, we were upset and thrown out altogether into the snow, as so often happens in Moscovite sledge-drivings.

“ In the emergency, old Skurjätin’s big pocket-book fell out of his kaftan; I picked it up and delivered it to him. Instead of thanking me for so doing, he overwhelmed me with abuse and threw the pocket-book at my head. I now thought of appropriating it to myself, but my master, who, in spite of all intoxication, had always a sharp eye for such matters, commanded me to give him the pocket-book and he would keep it until morning; whereupon he put it in his fur-coat pocket. Scarcely had the old gentlemen, after great exertions, remounted the sledge, when they fell asleep one after the other. The way we had to go was a long one. I could not resist the impulse of curiosity to make an attempt to get the pocket-book once more into my possession and see what was in it. The attempt

succeeded, and having just cast a glance over its contents and discovered therein a multitude of bank-notes, I took three of them out and hid them in my kaftan, and then put the pocket-book back into my master's pocket.

"I felt indeed that I had done wrong, but I was glad at having played a trick upon the rich old Skurjätin, who had always used me so roughly; and then it was clear that without me his pocket-book would have been lost altogether; I had saved it for him, and thought I deserved a reward for so doing, which I took at once myself in order to be sure of it.

"We halted before Skurjätin's house. I roused the old gentleman, and took care to see him delivered into safe keeping. When we arrived, a quarter of an hour later, at our dwelling, my master, by means of sleep, cold, and the long ride, had become quite brisk again. I myself reminded him not to forget the pocket-book. He took it out and laid it along with his own in a little chest standing before his bed, wherein he was accustomed to lock up his money.

"Scarcely had we risen on the following day

when Skurjätin, in a state of great excitement, came rushing into my master's room, where I was just engaged in making preparations for breakfast, and inquired whether we had not found his pocket-book, which he must have lost on the way last night. There were a number of valuable papers, bills of exchange, and bank-notes contained in it.

“‘I have taken it under my own care and locked it up for security,’ said my master, as he took the pocket-book from the little chest and placed it in Skurjätin's hands.

“With a thousand joyful acknowledgments, the latter took the restored treasure, counted the contents quickly over, and his countenance darkened somewhat when he had finished glancing through the papers. ‘Could I have laid the money anywhere else?’ I heard him mumble to himself. Thereupon he took his leave without saying any more.

“I was occupied the whole day with various commissions in the city, and when I came home in the evening I found my master quite out of tune; I soon ascertained the cause of his per-

turbation. Skurjätin had been again to confer with him about the missing bank-notes. Tomamshév, who, in his own opinion, had kept the pocket-book unopened in his possession to the last moment, felt himself injured by Skurjätin's assertions, and, after a violent altercation, had shown his mercantile friend the door.

“So stood matters when I came home. I was very anxious about it, but found some consolation in the fact that no suspicion had fallen on me, and that in the event of a breach between the two, the damage would be sure to remain on the side of Skurjätin, who earned a great deal of money from my master and would therefore use all his endeavours to come to again.

“I met him on the following day in the bazaar in the Kitaïsky-Gorod*. In the very special friendliness with which he greeted me, I soon perceived he had some design upon me. He gave me his hand, bade me accompany him into the Traktir to take a little refreshment, and was full of praise as to my excellent qualities.

* Kitaïsky-Gorod, the Chinese city. So the city proper is named.

“After we had drunk a good glass of wine together, and his tongue began to move freely, he spoke out. First, he said how sorry he was that so unfortunate a misunderstanding had arisen between my master and himself; the unaccountable disappearance of the three bank-notes (each a hundred rubles in value) was indeed a very vexatious circumstance, and had put him for the moment out of temper; but, in point of fact, the matter was not important enough to justify a breach between two old commercial friends; he (Skurjätin) would willingly lose double the amount if he could again restore his old union with Tomamshev. And now he made me the very proposal that I should feign to have secretly removed the money; for this act of friendship he offered me a considerable sum; and in the event of my losing service by the procedure, he would procure me another and more lucrative situation.

“At first I pretended to be indignant at the proposal, but soon entered into it, when I saw he was in earnest. The seemingly easier expedient of saying he had subsequently found the

money, he would at any price avoid ; for he knew the great exactness of my master, who would have looked upon such an irregular circumstance as already, in itself, a sufficient ground for hostility.

“ I threw myself at old Tomamshev’s feet, and made so affecting a confession of my sin, that the good old fellow forgave me all. Soon, moreover, the friendship between him and Skurjätin was restored ; and, after deducting costs for absolution at the priest’s, there remained to me exactly three hundred silver rubles as my gain by the transaction.”

“ Now thou art a pretty knave ! ” cried I, when Giorgi had ended his story. “ But hadst thou then no more stings of conscience, after the priest had given thee absolution ? ”

“ No,” rejoined he, very coolly ; “ what else did I pay away no trifle of money for ? ”

I made a few more appeals to his conscience, but he answered very curtly on the subject. The sole object of his narrative had been to show me that he had had opportunity enough of earning a bit of money, and that it would not be

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too great a sacrifice for him to return me what, on the presumption of my being a rich man, he had charged too much to my account.

Of course I would not hear of such a thing, however much he begged and implored; but from that day forth, I travelled with unexampled cheapness, and had as frequent occasion of wondering at the reasonableness of provisions, &c., as before at the contrary.

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I have repeated this story somewhat copiously, as giving an insight into the world of thought and feeling of a whole class of men, the knowledge of whom is at least quite as important as the knowledge of rare stones, birds, and plants.

Giorgi may be regarded as a representative of those Armenians, of his grade of cultivation, who have stood in longer and closer contact with the Russians.

It is incredible how ruinous and demoralizing the Russian influence is on all the tribes subjected to the sceptre of the white Czar. The manners and customs peculiar to the country,

which have occupied for centuries the place of laws, vanish before the foreign intruders, without being supplanted by anything better. The distinctions of goodness are effaced, and the bad is extended and generalized, as the weed luxuriates everywhere with ease, while flowers and fruit-trees need careful training.

The Russians cannot ply this training, for they have never shared in its beneficent influence themselves. They can only multiply the primordial ills and burdens of the people, without giving them a moral counterbalance.

The only things they bring with them into the conquered lands, are new coercive measures from the old coercive state, new forms of deceit, of falsehood, and of abuse of the church for objects of police.

Following the course of thought, let us look, for a while, at the two provinces lying nearest us here, Georgia and Armenia, to which the Emperor, in exchange for all the sacrifices wrung from them, has hitherto been able to offer nothing but a French dress-coat and the Russian language.

What advantage is it to these people, that, in

order to attain, conformably with the ruling prejudice, an appearance of civilization, they are forced into clothes and gloves of French cut, at the expense of their own picturesque national costume?

What advantage, further, is it to them to renounce their own language and customs, for the purpose of receiving the Russian language and customs in their stead?

The Georgian as well as the Armenian literature can claim for itself a perfect equality with the Russian. Whatever of new the Russians have to offer in this respect belongs not to themselves, but is borrowed, mutilated, and falsified from the German, English, and French.

Is Russian erudition, forsooth, to play the part of mediator between these provinces and classical antiquity? A single glance at the catalogue of the old library of Etshmiadsin suffices to show that this is unnecessary.

As the Armenians had an excellent translation of the Bible half a century before the Russians knew anything of Christianity, so they had likewise translations and imitations of the ancient

classics long before the Czar's dominion grew up from the ruins of the republic of Novgorod, a grave of culture for the old, and a scourge for the new world.

Or is it imagined that Russia has promoted the agriculture, the commerce, the trade, the industry of the Georgians and Armenians?

Few of the children of these lands find their bread in the workshop, but many find their death on the battle-field.

The agriculture still reminds one of the primitive condition of men, and has only been promoted here and there by those governors who, like Prince Woronzov, have found in it a favourite occupation.

Of the trades, those only flourish which produce the instruments of war, arms, and military accoutrements.

And how can it be otherwise in lands where, for more than half a century, all human activity, on the great scale, has been directed solely to battle, murder, and destruction, and the merits of men are only reckoned by the number of their fellow-men whom they have slain?

The arts of peace love not the noise of war, and fly affrighted before the thunder of cannon, the trampling of steeds, and the trumpets of battle.

What remains, then, still left for the conquerors to do for the welfare of these lands?

He who, with attentive ear and eye, travels through the wide empire of the Czar, surrounding three parts of the world with its snares, and then takes the sum of his contemplations, will tremble in thought at the destiny which this Colossus of nations has yet to fulfil.

He who doubts of the impending fulfilment of this destiny, knows not history and knows not Russia.

However different in origin and interests the strangely-mingled hordes may be which constitute this giant realm, there exists one mighty bond that holds them all together—the Byzantine Church! Whoever remains out of it will soon be forced into it; and, ere the coming century begins, all the inhabitants of Russia will be of one faith.

Already that great net, whose meshes the

Neva and the Volga, the Don and the Dnjepr, the Kyros and the Araxes, form, incloses a preponderating Christian population, in whose midst the scattered Islamitish race, the descendants of the Golden Horde, are lost like drops in the ocean.

What a marvellous disposition of things, that the Russian Empire, whose governing principle is the diametrical opposite of the Christian law, should be the very one to make of Christianity the corner and keystone of its might ! And a no less marvellous disposition of things is it, that the Czar, in whatever direction he stretches his far-grasping arms, should find Christian points of support whereon to knit the threads of fate for the followers of Islam, artfully scattered by him : that he should find Armenians at the foot of Ararat, and Georgians at the foot of Caucasus !

But of what kind is this Christianity, that masses together so many millions of human beings into one great whole, and uses them as moving-springs to the manifestations of a power that will sooner or later give the old world a new transformation ?

Follow me for a moment into the Russian mother-land, and throw a flying glance over the religious state of things prevailing there.

See that poor soldier, who, tired and hungry from his long march, is first performing his sacred exercises, ere he takes his meal and seeks repose.

He draws a little image of the Virgin from his pocket, spits on it, and wipes it with his coat sleeve; then he sets it down on the ground, kneels before it, and crosses himself, and kisses it in pious devotion.

Or enter with me, on a Sunday, one of the gloomy, image-adorned Russian churches. If the dress of those present is not already sufficient to indicate their differences of station, you may readily distinguish these by the manner in which each person makes the sign of the cross.

Consider first that man of rank, as he stands before the miracle-working image of a Kasan-shian Mother of God, bows slightly before it, and crosses himself notably. Translated into our vernacular, the language of this personage's face would run in somewhat of the following strain:—"I know that all this is a pious farce,

but one must give no offence to the people, else all respect would be lost. Would the people continue to toil for us if they were to lose their trust in the assurances we cause to be made to them of the joys of heaven?"

Now look at that kaftan-clad, fat merchant, as, with crafty glance and confident step, he makes up to the priest, to get his soul freed from the trafficking sins of the past week.

He knows the priest, and is sure that a good piece of money will meet with a good reception from him; that is why he goes so carelessly, in the consciousness of being able to settle in the lump the whole of his sinful account. And when the absolution is over, he takes his position in front of the most miraculous image, and makes so prodigious a sign of the cross, that before this act all the remaining scruples of his soul must vanish away.

Consider, in fine, that poor countryman, who steals in humbly at the door, and gazes shily round him in the incense-beclouded spaces. The pomp and the splendour are too much for the poor fellow.

"God!" he thinks, "but what a gracious lord the Emperor is, that he lets such fine churches be built for us poor devils! God bless the Emperor!"

And then he steps timidly up to some holy image, where the golden ground and the dark colours form the most glaring contrast, and throws himself down before it, and crosses the floor with his forehead, so that his long hair falls right over his face; and thus he wearies himself with prostrations and enormous crossings, until he can do no more for exhaustion. For the poorer the man in Russia, the larger the cross he signs and wears.

* * * * *

We leave Osurgethi at sunrise, and throw a last look on the blooming land, and on the mountain-chains that traverse and encompass it.

The morning is fresh and calm. Over the dark green around us, white streaks float swimming away, and every moment brighten and grow more transparent as the day arises. In the north, the snow-clad tops of the wildly-cloven Caucasus! Already, over the heights of

Elboruz flows as it were a sea of fire, and further and further it advances downwards, and springs in a dazzling play of colours from peak to peak, from rock to rock. We turn our wandering gaze to the south, towards the Adzharia Mountains, separating Guria from Anatolia, and shimmering in the freshest morning splendour. Thence our eyes wander to the west, where the Black Sea opens before us in unbounded expanse, flashing and shining as the sun itself. Thither leads our way.

From the charming valley, covered with maize and millet and vine-mantled trees, where Osurgethi lies, we wend our way, following the course of the Natanebi, to St. Nicolaus, a miserable fort on the coast, situated in a sandy down, close on the Turkish frontier, and remarkable for nothing but its bad air and unhealthy situation. Hence we return, by Poti and Redut-Kalé, back to the shores of the Circassian land.

CHAPTER V.

AMONG THE CIRCASSIANS.

FROM where the Tsholok draws the dividing line between Guria and the Pashalik of Trebizond, onwards up to the slave-market of Anapa, famed of old, where too, in earlier times, a Pasha had his seat, run three and twenty Russian fortresses along the eastern shore of Pontus.

Very few of these fortresses (*kreposti*) deserve their high-sounding name; they are, for the most part, rudely-built, intrenched squares, having block-houses furnished with cannon, just sufficient for the defence of their garrison, as far as the guns reach, and the woods round about are cleared, but unable to withstand a resolute attack.

Every now and then the Circassians conquer some of these fortified places when the army

niton but they cannot maintain them for any length of time, because, first, their supply of powder would not hold out long for the great cannons, and, further, because so many resources stand open on all sides to the Russians.

From the war-ships, constantly cruising on the Black Sea, regiments can speedily be thrown ashore, and the line of garrison itself, owing to the short distance of the forts from each other, can always despatch one or two thousand men in a few days.

The total number of the garrison, consisting of troops of the line and Tshornomorishian* Cossacks is 12,000 men, or sixteen battalions, which are distributed according to the importance of the fortresses, in such a way, that at the larger stations, such as Anapa, Novorossiesk, Pitzunda, Bombor, &c., whole battalions; at others, such as Gagra, Ilori, &c., only one or two hundred men; and at very insignificant places, such as Anaklea, only a dozen or two Cossacks are quartered, to maintain the communication.

All these regulations, however, as lies in the

* From Tshornoje More, the Black Sea.

nature of the case, can only be looked upon as transitory; for the importance of a station entirely depends on the more or less hostile sentiments of the country, whose outpost towards the sea it forms.

Forts, whose foundation reaches back into antiquity, such as Anaklea (the Greek Heraklea), have retained nothing of their early glory but a corrupted name; whilst others, that are indebted for their foundation to quite modern times, such as Novorossiesk, will grow, in the course of the next ten years, to flourishing towns, if the Russian power, in its career of extension, be not soon encountered by the commanding voice of destiny: "Hitherto shalt thou come, but no further, and here shall thy proud waves be stayed!"

* * * * *

The maritime provinces of Pontus, skirted by the fortresses above described, and forming the scene of the following narrations, are essentially distinct in nature and population from those countries where Imam Shamyl is fighting his battle of despair against the Russians.

Whereas the tribes of Daghestan (the proper

arena of the "holy war") were gathered by Shamyl's powerful hand from their former state of dispersion, and united into one political community, which more and more acquires the character of a theocracy,—the tribes of Western Caucasus, dwelling between the Kuban and the Black Sea, can never be persuaded to sacrifice their old clan-life of freedom for a centralizing political union.

Only in times of common danger have they united together against their common hereditary foe. When the danger was over, the old dispersion again took place.

For a better understanding of the sequel, I here subjoin the names of the most important of these tribes, with as accurate a definition as possible of the limits of their territory.

From the arm of the Kuban, rolling along its slimy billows in westerly course to the Black Sea, and discharging itself into a large bay, almost entirely surrounded by a narrow neck of land, and called the Liman, or Bay of the Kuban, down as far as the fortress of Kabardinskoje, extends the land of the Natchokuadsh.

Following the coast further in a south-easterly direction, and passing Gelendzhik and Novotroitskoje (in whose neighbourhood the English traveller Longworth effected his adventurous landing), we come to Tenginskoje, which we may consider the frontier stronghold of the land of the Shapsuch.

Single branches of this family, intermingled with Abazechians, stretch downwards along the line of coast, which is skirted by the fortresses Weljaminskoje, Lasarev, and Golovinsky, to the land of the Ubych.

The river Szotsha, at whose mouth lies the fort of the same name (called also on the charts of the Russian staff, Navaginskoje), separates the land of the Ubych from the territory of the Dzhigeth, on whose shore lie two remarkable fortresses: Ssvjätovo-Ducha*, where the famous Russian poet Marlinski lost his life; and Gagra, on whose romantic coast tradition places the rock of Prometheus.

All these tribes of people taken together, bear the common name of Adighe, or Circassians.

* That is, being interpreted, the stronghold of the Holy Ghost.

The river Bsyb divides the country of the Dzhigeth from the land of the Abchasians, which may be regarded as neutral territory, or as the transition point from the tribes in hostility with Russia to the tribes in subjection to her; for already, on repeated occasions, the Abchasians have rendered the Russians effective service for large rewards of money, especially in the march of extermination against the tribe of Pshu, whereof we shall presently speak.

The fortresses on the coast of Abchasia are : Pitzunda, with its celebrated temple-ruin; Bombor, with a pretty extensive bazaar; Ssuchum-Kalé*, Drandy, and Ilori.

The river Galidsga, flowing out not far from the last-named fort, forms the boundary line between Abchaseth and Samurzachan, a little province already included under Russian sway.

The Ingur, plunging down from the slopes of

* *Kalé* signifies, in Turkish, the *fortress*. *Krepost* denotes the same in Russian; and, as is well known, the French word *redoute* has also a not very different meaning. It is comical enough, therefore, to hear the port which stands at the mouth of the Chopi called by the Russians, *Krepost-Redut-Kalé*.

Elboruz, and meandering through the land of the Suanians, parts Samurzachan from the Russian divisions of the ancient Colchis, with which we have already become acquainted, under the names of Mingrelia and Guria.

The Ingur discharges itself at Anaklea; the boisterous Chopi at Redut-Kalé; the Rion (Phasis), at Toti; the Ssupsza, at Grigorethi; the Natanebi and the Tsholok (mentioned at the beginning of this chapter) empty themselves at St. Nicolaus into the Black Sea.

The sketch thus hastily drawn from my own view of this maritime region is then complete, and seemed to me needed, in order to prepare the reader for the proper understanding of the sequel.

With a map in his hand, any one will now be able to follow our orient track, when, without intermediate transition, we spring from fortress to fortress, or from one tribe of people to another.

The friendly reception which I had found, on a former excursion through the mountains, among the chieftains of Kabardah, a short sojourn among the Abchasians, and many other circumstances, had excited in me the wish to cast a glance also

on the interior of the lands of the Ubych and Dzhigeth.

Already on my first voyage along the coast, at the negotiations then held between the Russians and Circassians, I had come into frequent personal contact with the most distinguished chieftains of these peoples, especially with Aszlan-Bey*, the stately Dzhigethian prince, and with the gigantic Jerinbyk Bersek-Bey, the most terrible foe of Russia among the Ubychian people.

On my second excursion we renewed our acquaintance. I saw Aszlan-Bey almost every day at Swan-Bey's, the commandant of Ardiller, during my residence in this fortress; and the proud Jerinbyk Bersek, with many other chieftains, I met again at Szotsha, the very fortress whose garrison, a few months afterwards, he smote to the last man with the edge of the sword.

Occasion for frequent interviews between the leaders of the Circassians and Russians, had been given by the recall of the late Sardaar of the Caucasus (General von Neidhart), into whose

* Aszlan, corrupted from Arslan, the Lion.

place Prince (then Count) Woronzov³ had entered, invested with almost unlimited authority.

The fame of this mighty and rich Bojar, who, on his estates, situated in the most fertile parts of Russia, counts more than a hundred thousand bondmen, had already long since come to the knowledge of the mountain-tribes. It was known that Woronzov, as governor in the Crimea, had exercised an all but kingly power, and that this power had principally been displayed in the promotion of the welfare of the Islamitish population of that land; wondrous things were told of the (truly magnificent) pomp of his castles, of his magnanimity, his generosity, and his inexhaustible riches. There was every reason to anticipate that the special favours he had conferred on the ruins of population still remaining of the old Tartar realm of Sahin-Gerai-Chan, he would also now bestow on the Circassian followers of Islam.

Several old chieftains remembered him well from his youth, he having begun his warlike career in the Caucasus. The ambassadors, moreover, who had seen him on his journey to Tif-

were quite enraptured with his imposing personal appearance; for the Circassians are ardent admirers of fine manly forms; and Prince Woronzov, notwithstanding his seventy years, is one of the finest men I have seen in my life.

All things, then, contributed to induce in the warlike peoples of the coast, the belief that the time was come when they might accomplish more by peaceful negotiations, than they had hitherto been in a position to effect by force of arms against a well-disciplined and superior force.

The Russians, on their side, were overjoyed to know they were safe for a time from hostile surprises, and to use the tongue instead of the sword.

All over the country the negotiations, orientally lavish of speech, began; and the magnificent scenes, which, in consequence, almost daily passed before my eyes, are among the most splendid recollections of my life. I only regretted that I had not a skilful painter at my side, who could have fixed the warlike groups in the midst of the majestic world of mountains; for my own diletanté studies were insufficient to the task*.

* On my second voyage, described in the first part of the

I will endeavour, as far as words will allow, to give the reader an idea of these negotiations, all of which took place in the open air, by a slight sketch of one which I remember with especial vividness.

Already, in the neighbourhood of Fort Golovinsky*, some days before our arrival, Circassian horsemen had pitched their encampment to wait for the landing of the war-steamer which carried the commanding General on board, and then immediately to give intelligence of it to their countrymen.

About eight o'clock in the morning we ran "Thousand and One Days," amongst the numerous company on board there was a talented young painter, H. Dorogov, who has drawn with great skill a variety of views in the Caucasus, part of which are now in the possession of Prince Woronzov. It would essentially contribute to the general diffusion of a knowledge of the Caucasus, if H. Dorogov would resolve on the multiplication of his entire album by means of the graver.

* So called from General Golovin, formerly Commander-in-Chief in the Caucasus. Several more of the above-mentioned fortresses received their names from Caucasian generals, as, for example, Lasarev, Weljaminovskoje, &c.

into the haven of Golovinsky, and about two o'clock in the afternoon a stately assemblage of Circassian chieftains and mullahs, with a large train, had likewise arrived.

Before the actual negotiation began, an embassy was sent off for the purpose of appointing the conditions under which the meeting was to be held.

The following points were agreed upon: Firstly, the scene of conference should be out of reach of the Russian artillery. Secondly, the number of Circassians present should not exceed those of the Russians; and if other Circassians were discovered anywhere in the neighbourhood, outside of the circle designed for the assembly, the garrison of the fort should thereupon discharge their pieces. Thirdly, the Circassians should lay down their arms whilst the conference lasted, and confide them to the care of Russian soldiers; only the chiefs who were to speak being allowed to retain their pistols in their girdles.

Hereupon the General betook himself, with his brilliant train, to the place appointed, where the Circassians were already assembled.

A mountain-valley, covered with swelling turf and surrounded by thickly-wooded heights, which opened towards the east an enchanting prospect into the interior of a country luxuriating in the utmost vigour of vegetation, was the theatre of the warlike scene that unrolled before us.

About a dozen chairs were set in the form of a crescent, and upon them the most distinguished chiefs and mullahs took their places; while the remaining Circassians partly lay stretched out on the turf, partly stood at some distance to the right by the side of their horses.

To the left stood Russian soldiers keeping guard by the arms picturesquely gathered and piled one over another. They were a rich collection of most splendid shashkas (long sabres), and kamas, or kinshals (long daggers).

A young warrior, about to enter the circle of counsel-bearing men, refused to surrender his pistol to the soldiers. They were preparing to put him back, when, with a haughty look, he struck the soldier whose hand was on his arm, with such violence on the side, that the soldier fell upon the grass. A stir arose among his com-

rades, the chieftains sprang up from their seats, and a serious disturbance threatened to ensue, inasmuch as the young Circassian, the cause of the strife, would by no means be persuaded to give up his pistol. When the interpreter in the employ of the General told him that unless he would yield, the negotiations could not possibly begin, he fired his pistol into the air, put it back into his girdle, and then took his place among the counsel-bearing men, without further circumspection on his part or molestation from the soldiers.

At some distance, opposite the chieftains thus sitting crescent-wise before him, sat the General, with two or three other officers of superior rank; behind him stood one or two adjutants, and at his side stood his interpreter, a Circassian, who had been taken prisoner in his youth and was now lieutenant in the Russian service.

About ten paces from these lay the remaining officers with us on the turf, regarding the picturesque spectacle with attentive eyes. The chieftains wore, for the most part, fine red shoes, pliantly yielding to the softest movements of the

foot; dark close-fitting riding-trowsers, and the well-known girdle-encircled Circassian war-dress of blue or brownish colour. In some we could discern the ringletted coat of mail gleaming forth from under the war-dress, which was slit in the upper part like the kaftan. The black, shaggy fur caps gave to the earnest, sun-browned, expressive countenances an almost terrible aspect.

Some of the more distinguished chieftains wore, like the mullahs, dazzling white turbans.

The eye lingered, with ever-growing delight, on these broad-shouldered, powerful forms of men, sitting there in earnest consultation on the proposals made by the Russians for alleviating the distress of their tribes, who had been visited by a frightful famine.

From time to time one of the eldest of them rose and went to the General, who then immediately stood up to hear the counter-proposal.

The subject of the negotiation was an extremely simple one.

The peoples of the coast desired nothing but free navigation on the Black Sea, and free commercial intercourse with Trebizond and Constantinople.

tinople. In return they solemnly promised to refrain for all time from hostility towards the Russians. The sum and substance of their proposals were: Molest us not and we will not molest you.

But such an argument was, of course, too simple and artless for Russian diplomacy.

The many war-ships on the Black Sea, and the many forts on the coast, together with their garrisons, forsooth, would become quite useless so soon as the checks and limitations by land and water ceased. What was to be done with the plentiful building-material that everywhere lay heaped up for the construction of new fortresses and the enlargement of the old? To what end had so many millions already been lavished, and so many thousands of men sacrificed? It could not possibly be just admitted that all this had been in vain; and what, in fine, would become of the philanthropic views of the Emperor, who, of course, thinks of anything but making conquests for the mere sake of widening his dominions by force, but whose endeavour is solely

whom he wars, and to the enlightening of them on their true interest?

Such and similar themes formed the pith of the Russian arguments, the convincing clearness of which the Circassians naturally failed to perceive.

It was to be anticipated that under such circumstances the negotiation would lead to no result. The only thing to which the General would consent, in order to stop the famine in the land (which had been chiefly caused by the restrictive system), was the promise already made without success to several other tribes, that bread and ample pay should be given to all needy Circassians who were ready to labour at the Russian fortification-works and buildings.

“That is,” said Jerinbyk Bersek-Bey, “hunger and perish, or come and help yourselves to build the strongholds of the tyrants who are to lord it over your land !”

The less hope there appeared during the course of the negotiation thus conducted of a happy result, the more the looks of the discours-

The conference had lasted more than two hours, and, as yet, no sign of an end was visible; for when the Circassians have once entered the path of negotiation, they leave no means untried to attain some object on this way.

A short pause had just ensued; the chiefs were consulting over a new proposal, and walking up and down in lively conversation. The General had likewise risen to move about awhile. He came to us and said,—

“Now, are you not tired? I am afraid we shall not get on board again till late in the evening! These negotiations always spin out to a great length! I should like to know where the describers of Caucasian manners discovered that the Circassians consider it indecorous to make inquiries about family circumstances; in our present conference we have at least lost half an hour in this way, for all the discoursing chiefs have introduced their speeches with a flourish of pretty words regarding the presumptive grace and beauty, and with long inquiries concerning the health of the female members of my house.”

The General was suddenly interrupted by a

cannon-shot fired from the fortress and thunderingly reverberated by the mountains round.

“What is that?” resounded on all sides. The Circassians sprang up, and would have seized their arms, but the soldiers offered resistance. Universal confusion. The General stepped up to the oldest chieftain, and cried in earnest tone,—

“I make thee answerable for the conduct of thy people; I shall send to inquire what the discharge means, and afterwards we will speak further.”

The interpreter immediately repeated the General's words; but it was a long time before the haughty sons of the mountains could be brought to order, military discipline among the Circassians being altogether unknown.

In the meantime the officers who had been sent to the fortress to ascertain the occasion of the firing, returned.

Their report was, that a troop of Circassian horsemen having been seen in the neighbourhood of the fortress, the commandant had immediately caused a discharge of grape-shot to be fired among them, according to the resolution

agreed upon, that during the negotiation no Circassians should show themselves in the country round about.

“Are any wounded?” asked the General.

“As well as could be perceived, two horsemen fell,” replied the officer addressed.

Again there arose a violent tumult among the Circassians, and the leading chiefs had great difficulty in explaining to the warriors that the commandant of the fortress had only acted in accordance with the agreement between them.

The occurrence was very displeasing to the General himself. He was too well acquainted with the Circassians not to know that they leave nothing unrevenged. He succeeded, indeed, in once again renewing the negotiation, but with as little likelihood of result as before.

With the approach of evening the assembly was broken up, and the departing wore, at all events, a less friendly aspect than the first greeting had done. The looks of the proud warriors promised no good, as they girded on their arms again, sprang upon their steeds, and galloped away to their native mountains.

Before we left Golovinsky we had an opportunity of seeing the interior of the fortress-church, which, shortly before, had been the scene of a bloody contest, whereof on the walls the images of the saints, perforated with shot, still bore manifest traces.

A troop of Circassians had stolen up, in the darkness of the night, so close to the fortress, that when the garrison became aware of their approach and discharged at random, the cannonballs literally whizzed sheer over their heads.

Before there was time to load again, the Circassians were already in the fortress; and here they commenced such a massacre, that the Russian force, consisting chiefly of unpractised soldiers, fell into utter confusion, and, in disorderly flight, sought refuge in the church. Scarcely half of them, however, could find shelter here; to the rest no other choice remained than to defend themselves with the courage of despair, or fall without resistance; for the wild sons of the mountains gave no quarter, but cut down all that came within sweep of their swords. Already they had made themselves masters of the great

guns, and had secured a rich booty of arms, powder, and shot (their principal object), and were just on the point of setting fire to the church, when the Priest of Golovinsky, a tall, powerful man, came marching up to the church, in festal apparel, rearing the crucifix high in his right hand, and brandishing a torch in his left.

The Circassians, dazzled by the extraordinary spectacle, which was all the more imposing, as the priest, with his fine beard, his proud demeanour, and his shining raiment, differed so completely from the flat-nosed, smooth-chinned Russian soldiers, rude alike in figure and costume, —desisted a moment from the contest, and allowed the priest an undisputed passage into the interior of the church.

One must have become acquainted by personal observation with the religious fanaticism of the Russians, entirely to comprehend what an impression was made upon the soldiers, when they saw the dreaded priest in their midst, with the crucifix in his hand, firing them on to the contest in the name of God, threatening them with hell and the devil for their cowardice, and

promising them all the joys of Paradise if they persevered courageously in the struggle against the pagans.

A fresh began a murderous affray, such as only madness or despair can generate. The soldiers rushed from the church, and resought their foes at large. The Circassians fell on them as they issued forth; balls flew hissing on all sides; within and without the church bodies were piled on bodies. Animated by their warlike priest, the Russians fought with such fury, that the Circassians, to whom, besides, the permanent possession of the fortress was a matter of little concern, withdrew after a short resistance, taking with them only a part of their plunder.

The priest, after this event, was honoured as a saint by the soldiers, inasmuch as, wondrous to relate, no ball had struck him, although he had all the time been engaged in the thickest of the fray.

It was natural that this marvellous story should furnish a copious theme for conversation and edification to the whole garrison of the chain of forts, and contribute not a little to raise the

authority of the priests, and to strengthen the soldiers in the belief of the holiness of their cause.

The Emperor thanked the priest of Golovinsky, in a letter written by his own hand, for his heroic deed, and transmitted to him as a reward the *cordon* of St. George.

"But I have always understood," said I, as we returned to our ship, to the officer who had given me the above narration, "I have always understood that it is contrary to the manners and customs of the Circassians to make nightly attacks."

"That is quite true," rejoined my companion, "and this case, as far as my experience goes, stands quite alone; it was just because the commandant thought of anything rather than a nightly attack, that the Circassians succeeded so easily in surprising the fortress. The battle began after midnight, and did not end until after sunrise. For the rest, we have learned from deserters, as well as from some chiefs of the race of Tshikapu themselves, that in the public council (*medzhilis*) of the Shapszuch, the majority of the

tamatas (elders) declared themselves opposed to nightly surprises; it being contrary to the custom of the country and to the manner of brave men to attack the enemy in the darkness of night. But their voice did not prevail, because some of them were accused of being on a good understanding with the Russians, and such a suspicion is sufficient to rob the mightiest personages of the land, for the time, of all their influence."

* * * * *

The air was cool and the sky troubled when we left Golovinsky to proceed on our voyage along the coast of the Shapszueh.

The most beautiful part of our course was left behind us; for however blooming and rich in natural beauties the lands of the Shapszueh and Natchokuadsh may be in their interior, their coasts have nothing of the magnificent character which distinguishes those of the Abchasians, Ubych, and Dzhigeth. The mountain-ridges become continually smaller, the vegetation becomes continually poorer, the further we recede from Golovinsky in the direction of Taman.

The intelligence having reached us that Circassian negotiators were again awaiting us at Gelendzhik, we tarried at all the intermediate forts, Lasarev, Weljaminovskoje, Tenzinsoje, and Novotroitskoje, only a few hours, spent the night on board, and on the following morning, with the most glorious weather, sailed to Gelendzhik. Part of our force had already been detached by the General during the night on barkasses, in order, under the command of the Cossack Colonel Barachovitsh, to chase a Turkish tshekjdermeh*, which had left the coast in the evening probably to steer in the direction of Trebizond.

Barachovitsh was then the famous hero of the day among the Tshornjomorishian Cossacks. By his last successful feat, in particular, he had risen to high honour and distinction. With the aid of two barkasses, namely (covered, however, by the steamer on which we were embarked), he had captured a Turkish slave-ship, and made eighty

* Tshekjdermehs, so the little ships are called which keep up the intercourse between the Turks and Circassians. They are built flat and low so as easily to be drawn up on

prisoners, among whom were sixty virgins, destined for Turkish harems, who were now provided for in the fortress-chambers of Gelendzhik and Novorossiesk, until further orders should be received from Petersburg.

The battle with the male portion of the crew had been but short; all the more difficult, however, was it for the Cossacks to get possession of the fair Circassian girls; some of whom defended themselves most desperately, while others sprang into the sea rather than fall into the hands of the Russians. Most of them, indeed, were saved by the Cossacks, who leaped in after them; but three or four maidens found their death in the waves. The remainder were brought into the fortresses already mentioned, with no happier prospect than that of helping to beautify the Moscovite race in some Russian military colony.

So favourable an opportunity is doubtless seldom afforded to the traveller of seeing together such a number of young maidens of the most inaccessible tribes of the Caucasus. Accordingly I availed myself with the greatest conscientiousness of the time allowed me to linger among the

fair recruits of the harem, to converse with them, and impress myself with what was peculiar in their appearances.

A large airy apartment, supported by rude columns, served the fair captives for a dwelling. On the floor, which, as far as I recollect, consisted of smooth, hardened loam, lay mats and coarse carpets outspread. Furniture, except some old tables and stools, there was none to be seen.

The beautiful captives, who partly lay carelessly outstretched, partly reposed, with crossed legs, on the carpets, all rose together when we entered the room. I ascribed this, at the time, to the circumstance that some generals and other distinguished personages were in our company, but subsequently learned that, according to the old-established usage of the country, every Circassian female, however high her rank, rises before every man who enters her apartment, even if it be her own servant.

One saw it was painful to the poor maidens to be gaped at by us; some turned their heads away when we passed by; others sank their eyes

to the ground; only a few of them looked us free in the face, and answered without hesitation the questions we put to them by the interpreter. I wondered at seeing the greater number of the maidens quite masked up in the Turkish fashion, knowing that among the Circassians only the married women veil the face and observe a certain distance towards men, whilst the maidens there carry themselves with the same freedom as amongst us.

I was told, however, that the slaveholders make a great point of habituating their fair captives from the very beginning to Turkish customs. Nay, in Stamboul there is a special preparatory school, where the young Circassian girls must first go through a two years' course of training before they are deemed ripe to adorn the harem of a Turkish grandee. Here they are instructed, always according to their dispositions, in feminine handiworks, in music and singing, in the Persian and Turkish languages. The expenses of this (in the Oriental sense) very careful education are borne by the slaveholder, who, at the sale, of course does not forget to extol the

brilliance bestowed on his harem-pearls by their Turkish culture. These men like best to obtain the Circassian maidens while they are yet children, since then they accustom themselves more easily to the Turkish life, and are more susceptible of learning the languages and music.

Accordingly, among our youthful captives of Gelendzhik, there were six children from eight to fourteen years of age.

Had I seen these children in a western dress, and in different circumstances, I should have taken them at once for English girls, so pure and healthful was their complexion, so regular their features, so clear and beautifully-delineated their eyes.

Among the full-grown maidens I only found four who were real beauties, in our sense of the word. The remainder were distinguished rather for their slender shape, and by the smallness of their ears, hands, and feet—qualities on which the Turks lay great stress.

Besides a prevailingly slender figure, I could not in general tell what the fair Circassians had that was positively peculiar in their appearance,

and whereby they might at the first glance be known as the daughters of their land, in the same way, for instance, as we know a Georgian, an Armenian, or an English female. One might, perhaps, characterize them as the intermediate beauties of the fair world of the Orient and Occident; since in dress and manner they are quite Oriental, whilst they themselves have rather a European, I might say German appearance. Black hair and dark eyes are not more frequent among them than with us. Most of the captives of Gelendzhik had light or fair hair, blue or bright-brown eyes.

From the Georgian females the Circassian are essentially and advantageously distinguished by a greater sprightliness of spirit, and a greater activity of body. The fair Georgians, one soon perceives, are quickly-fading flowers; one can only think of them as reclining in lazy repose on the divan, or sitting motionless as pagodas on the roof, or gliding along with solemn step,—unless when, excited by music or song, they flourish their little feet in the lovely mazes of the Les-ginka. The Circassian females have, if I may

use the word, more *race*—they are nimbler, livelier, more elastic in mind and body. A Georgian lady can sit all day long in one spot, without doing anything else than play with the pearls of her tshotka*; the Circassian ladies uniformly busy themselves with womanly labours in the house and kitchen. Scarcely can the bravest warrior in this land gain greater fame by his hero-deeds, than a woman by especial skilfulness in knitting, weaving, and sewing.

For this reason the Turks know how to prize the Circassian maidens above all the daughters of the Morning-land.

One cannot imagine anything more graceful than the dress of these substantial beauties. The head is covered by a handsome little scarlet cap, with blue or silver stripes, from under which a profusion of most beautiful hair flows out in long curls. An elegantly-shaped corset, generally of blue silk, not reaching too high up, and fas-

* Tshotka, a kind of rosary, which the fair Georgians do not use for purposes of devotion, but merely to play with, and which with them supplies, as it were, the place of knitting.

tened in front by buttons, from which narrow stripes of silver run out, presses the breast somewhat more together than may be needful. A deep and fast-wound girdle then forms the passage to the proper gown (*anteri*), the colour of which is always different from that of the corset; and beneath the *anteri* the wide silken trousers (*shalvari*) rustle forth, making the prettily-shod feet, which are themselves so small, look still smaller.

A portion of our fair captives were, as I have already remarked, masked in the Turkish fashion, *i. e.* the maidens had the upper and lower part of the countenance twined round with white kerchiefs, so that we could only see their eyes and somewhat of their nose. This, however, did no actual detriment to our observations; for when we addressed any of the slender recruits of the harem, they pushed their kerchiefs down, without displaying much embarrassment in the unveiling of their faces.

One maiden in particular, of all this youthful band, deported herself with such freedom and assurance, that she might have been brought up

in the saloons of the great world, and not among the mountain ravines of Caucasus.

She was one of the archest and most graceful female forms I have ever met with in my life. Her slender, faultless figure made her appear somewhat taller than she really was; her neck was so nobly shaped, and of such delicacy and consistence, that it might have been moulded for eternity. An exquisite, close-shut mouth; roguish little dimples in the cheeks and chin; a nose uncommonly small for a Circassian; large, beautiful eyes, with long dark eyelashes, and a dazzling brown head of hair; small hands and feet—such were about the details of this wonderful being, in whose features manly determination and endurance contended for the mastery with womanly grace.

Remarkable as the entire appearance of the young Circassian was the story of her life.

Once already, four years ago, she had embarked for Turkey: the ship on which she was borne fell, however, after an obstinate struggle, in the Dardanelles; the fair companions of her

she herself was received into the house of Countess O——, the consort of a Russian general at Kertsh, there, in the duties of chambermaid, to forget the dreams of the harem.

Attached by kind and affectionate treatment, she remained in the house of the Countess about three years; turned the heads of many young people and old, without, however, losing her own head the while; learned with amazing rapidity Russian, French, and German; and—then availed herself of an opportunity that accidentally offered to escape again to her native land. She was obliged, in order to complete her flight, to perform a great part of the way by swimming; with rare endurance, however, she overcame all hardships and dangers, and came at length in safety back to her mountain-home.

Here a young champion fell in love with her, but soon afterwards, on an expedition against the Russians, met with his death. Almost at the same time, the great famine, caused by the bad harvest of the year 1844, broke out in the Circassian provinces. Troops of young maidens sought to escape to Turkey, and our heroine also

seized the first opportunity of embarking again for Trebizond. The ship was taken by Barachovitsh, and the fair Circassian fell once more into the hands of the Russians.

What has since become of her I know not. I have even forgotten her name; but her form of beauty—as whoever has once beheld her must confess for himself—abides unaltered in my memory.



As the time allowed for our stay at Gelendzhik was but short, we left the Hall of Beauty about mid-day, in order before dinner to make a little survey of the town, which had only been founded a few years ago, and whose works of fortification and enlargement were now being actively carried on. With what difficulties and costs, however, these works are connected, the reader may infer from the fact, that the material for them, to the last stone, has to be brought by ship all the way from Kertsh.

The Commandant of Gelendzhik, Major-General Count Oppermann, who, at the same time, exercises chief command over one of the four sections of the coast-garrison, had the goodness

personally to show and explain everything to us. But he looked so worn with suffering and disease, as if the bilious fever were a settled evil with him, that in mute agreement we shortened our survey as much as possible; there being—besides a pretty church, well-furnished barracks and hospitals, and admirably-managed gardens—no great deal to see; while the terrible heat rendered us ourselves incapable of much exertion.

Gelendzhik, on account of its fine safe bay, is eminently fitted to become a port; but the unhealthy climate, not less than the dangerous proximity of the Circassians, will long defer the time of the town's prosperity. A translation hither, attended even with imperial power, is little better than a banishment to Siberia. The inhabitants needed not to tell us the story of their sufferings; it stood written with frightful clearness in their faces. But most of all, Count Oppermann appeared to have suffered, and still to be suffering; and to this his previous unfortunate destiny had doubtless contributed in no small degree.

I learned a part of his mysterious history from the mouth of an officer to whom I had re-

marked that the Count seemed much more monosyllabic and reserved on political matters than all other Russian commanders with whom chance had brought me into contact.

"There are good reasons for it," replied my companion; "he has already been subjected to severe trials, and the story of his misfortune is not ended yet. Afterwards, when we return to the ship, and are undisturbed, I will tell you what I know about it. Have you made the acquaintance of the Countess yet?"

"No; I have a letter for her from a lady at Tiflis; but the Count told me she was now residing with her children at Kertsh, for the sake of better air and medical aid, as they had all suffered a great deal from fever."

"You must by no means lose the opportunity of visiting her. She is a rare woman; one of those women whom no one who has ever been in their company again forgets!"

He who thus spoke was himself a man whom it was only necessary to have seen once never again to forget. A personality grandly wrought by nature, and revealing itself not so much in

single striking features, as by the *tout ensemble* of its appearance. Born in the Ukraine, and gifted with the sensibility and lively fancy of an inhabitant of the south, he had been obliged, until his sixteenth year, to pass through a rigorous course of school discipline, under the guidance of a German philologist; then, pursuing the usual career of young Russians of distinguished birth, he entered at Petersburg the Corps of Pages, and thence the Guard, where, in the whirl of fashionable life, he spent some dissolute years. The idle dissipations of his comrades could not satisfy him long; he threw himself again into the ardours of study, and occasionally indulged in poetical effusions. A poem which he once composed in a haughty mood, and which, through a false friend, came to the wrong man, drew on him the hatred of a personage all-powerful in Russia. He was degraded, and sent as a common soldier to the Caucasus. Here, for a series of years, he served in all the campaigns, and at the time when I became acquainted with him, had risen again to the rank of lieutenant.

But, notwithstanding his subordinate position,

he enjoyed a respect among those by whom he was surrounded, such as only ascendancy of spirit, united with firmness of character, can secure. His vigour of spirit was not broken, but tempered, by the various fortune through which he had passed. He had become a fine observer; his changeful life had opened before him a new world of ideas and forms. Having become insensible to the common ambition, which thinks by orders or epaulets to succeed in covering the nakedness of mind and heart, he was all the more susceptible of the acknowledgments rendered to his personal superiority.

A wonderful facility of expression, an extraordinary memory, and a versatility of spirit incomprehensible by us heavy Germans, enabled him, according to circumstances, to spring from one subject to another, and always to hit the nail on the head.

If it is allowed the traveller to linger in the contemplation of a remarkable rock-formation, or rare plant, in a still higher degree should a remarkable man be deemed worthy of his attention. Although our hero, therefore, is neither

known to fame, nor has the prospect of becoming so, a few passages from his conversation may find place here, by way of giving the reader a faint conception of the charm it must have been for me to find under such circumstances such an exemplar of our species. The conversation with G. (so we will designate our banished friend) appeared to me full of interest, for the simple reason that he did not drag in his material by the head and ears, but always connected his remarks in the most natural manner with the persons and objects of our immediate surrroundment.

A thunder-storm gathered over our heads just as we were on the point of leaving Gelendzhik. The sky, so transparently blue an hour before, now vied in darkness with the Black Sea. From the bosom of the clouds the lightning sprang in gigantic zigzags over mountain and sea; and through the hollows, and round the heights, the thunder rolled in a thousand reverberations.

All the Russians in our company made the sign of the cross.

“What a strange contrast!” cried G. “We cross ourselves, in order, according to the belief of

the people, to preserve ourselves from the danger attendant on a thunder-storm; whilst our neighbours, the Circassians, consider this very danger a blessing and a favour of God. The man who among them is struck dead by lightning is deemed more fortunate than the hero who has fallen in battle; his fate is envied, and he is thought of as a saint. In the same way the spot is regarded by them as blessed where the lightning strikes a house or a tree. They therefore hail each thunder-storm with joy, and not, as we, with anxiety and fear."

He was interrupted by a long-continued roll of thunder that made all around tremble.

"In what a masterly manner," he continued, when it was again become somewhat calm, "has Byron known how to paint these mighty natural phenomena with mighty words:—

‘ From peak to peak

Leaps the live thunder—not from one lone cloud,

But every mountain now hath found a tongue!’

Lies there not in these few words the whole poetry of a thunder-storm in the mountains?"

"But I think," began a patriotic Russian, "our

Shukovsky does not yield to Byron in such depicting. Take only the fine poem wherein he describes the sea; what fire and pomp of colouring are displayed therein !”

“The poem is very pretty, but too lavish, and in any case, as a whole, does not equal those few lines of Byron.”

The other would not give in, and regretted he did not know the poem by heart, or he would convince the company in a better way.

“There I can help you out !” exclaimed G., and at the unanimous wish of all present began to recite :

“ O silent profound ! flushed with azure of Heaven,
Lo ! charmed o'er thy dark depth of wonder I gaze ;
Thou breathest of life, love is swelling thy bosom,
And wild thoughts are billowing through thee below.
O silent profound ! flushed with azure of Heaven,
Reveal me the secrets thy dread abyss holds !
Declare what is moving the billows eternal,
What heavily dwells on thy broad, heaving breast ?
Say, does the high Heaven, from afar flashing o'er thee,
Allure thee, perchance, from the bondage of earth ?
O'erflowing with life's mystic sweetness, thou spreadest
All pure, when Heaven o'er thee in purity bends ;

Thou beamest him back his shining blue splendour,
And glowest in rosy light, morning and eve.
Thou gladdenest thyself in his twinkling star brightness,
And fondly caressest his golden-winged clouds.
When darkly the cloud-hosts are hurtling together,
Obscuring the clearness of Heaven from the view,
Thou dashest and roarest, and liftest thy billows,
Wild-raging, wide-rending, to burst through the gloom,
And when darkness is vanishing, clouds away flying,
Still full of thy foregone alarm and dismay,
All panting thou drink'st in the terrified billows,
And the rapturous glance of the fresh-gleaming blue.
The calm of thy beauty is long in returning ;
Deceitful, O sea ! is thy varying face ;
In the silent depth thou sweet embarrassment hidest,
Oglest fondly with Heaven, and tremblest for him !"

The poem received the applause it well deserved ; but all agreed that it was, to the verses of Byron, as the flight of a dove to the flight of an eagle.

In the meantime the rain without had abated, and we were reminded that it was high time to return to the ship. The sun broke again through the clouds as we pushed from the shore, and the white little town, with its dark background of mountains, afforded a very pretty spectacle.

"Does not Byron's description of Marathon," G. began again, "apply to all the towns and fortresses of this coast?"

' The mountains look on Marathon,
And Marathon looks on the sea.'

They are but two verses, and yet they contain a great and perfect picture!"

"It is quite the fashion now with us to be always talking of Byron," said the patriotic Russian, with a somewhat disdainful air.

"There are good reasons why it should be," replied G. very composedly, "since, without an intimate knowledge of this English poet, the Russians could neither rightly understand nor rightly judge of their own modern poets, so powerful was his influence on our literature. If, in many respects, this influence is to be deplored on account of the numerous impurities and aberrations to which it has given occasion, it has been attended, nevertheless, by very beneficial consequences. Our more recent poets have learned from Byron shortness and simplicity of expression, a step in advance which cannot be too

highly valued; for prolixity and useless repetition in word and figure is a capital fault of our old national poetry, which else contains very much that is beautiful."

By this time we had reached the ship, but the conversation thus begun was continued with great vivacity. Not until supper-time could G. disengage himself from his auditors. Only two of the company retired to a distance, the old patriotic Russian and an officer still very young in years, but already very high in office, and in consequence very conceited, who held it beneath his dignity to suffer himself to be instructed by a lieutenant. The rest of us formed a group round G., who gave us an extremely piquant dissertation on the development of Russian poetry, adducing from memory a multitude of poems of various periods; and by his citations and comparisons from ancient and modern languages disclosing an extraordinary amount of reading.

The conceited young officer could not endure that G. should so attract the company and completely eclipse him in the eyes of the ladies. At

table he essayed all kinds of expedients in bad taste, without the least regard for others, to turn the attention to himself. While G., for example, was answering his fair neighbour a question, he suddenly began to exclaim, with a look of importance,

“We have a dangerous number at table, *thirteen* persons!”

“There are fourteen,” said the captain of the ship, correcting him.

“Why, so there are! I had forgotten myself!” cried the young hero, breaking out into a loud laugh.

“One should never forget himself in company,” G. quietly interjected, and proceeded with his conversation, while a consenting smile stole round the table. The laugh of the young hero, however, was changed into an angry blush.

The military gentlemen sat at table according to their order of rank, whilst the ladies did not observe etiquette so strictly, but had seated themselves wherever they found the pleasantest entertainment. The young hero occupied one of the upper seats, and as he could effect nothing against G. with intellectual weapons he endea-

voured to make him feel in a sensible manner his inferiority of rank.

"Why have you not chosen a better place, Anna Petrovna?" he inquired, with an affected smile, of a lady sitting by the side of G., towards the lower end of the table.

"This place suits me very well!" rejoined the lady.

"The best place is always where the best man sits," said G., looking at the commanding general, of whom we were all very fond; "and the worst place is where the worst man sits," he added in lengthened accent, as he fixed his eye on the young impertinent, who made the most hideous grimaces in his impotent confusion.

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Late in the evening, when the greater part of the company had retired to rest, I reminded G. of his promise to relate to me the history of Count Oppermann. We selected a comfortable little spot, provided ourselves with a good glass of grog, the air having become somewhat cool after the storm, and G. began with great amplitude his narration, the principal passages of which are contained in the next chapter.

CHAPTER VI.

THE EXILES.

AMONG the Polish noblemen who, being either guilty or suspected of having taken part in the revolution of 1831, were punished with banishment to Siberia and the confiscation of their property, one of the wealthiest and most distinguished was Count R.

His enemies to this day make it his reproach, and his friends to this day say in his defence, that in the enjoyment of the happiness afforded him by his beloved domestic circle, he at first took no part at all in the revolution, and only subsequently became so far involved in it, as he was forcibly carried on by the stream. But in the penal decisions no respect could be had to a greater or less degree of guilt, special inquiries

forming the exception, whilst, as a rule, the judicial process was a summary condemnation.

Count R. had a daughter, at that time about fifteen years of age, who, for her rare beauty, grace, and goodness of heart, was renowned in the whole neighbourhood. She was the pride and ornament of her house, and, already early robbed by death of maternal care, she hung on her father with a love that knew no bounds.

For him, the thought of being obliged to part from his dearest child went deeper to the old man's heart than even the grief he felt at the ruin of his fatherland and the loss of all his wealth and possessions. The Slavonian, of whatever race he may be, bears the vicissitudes of external fortune with almost Moslemish indifference—a phenomenon which doubtless finds its principal explanation in the uncertain circumstances wherein all Slavonian peoples live—whilst the family affection is more deeply rooted in him than in any other people.

The young Countess received her father's sentence of banishment with much greater tranquillity, and firmness than he had expected; for she

formed at once the unalterable resolution to accompany her father whithersoever fate might lead him. But this resolution was more easily embraced than accomplished. There was need first of long exertions and warm intercessions on the part of rich and influential men, to obtain, as a peculiar favour from the Emperor, permission for the daughter to follow her aged father into banishment. And when the permission at last arrived, the joy of the tender creature was so great, that she forgot all her other sorrow thereupon, as much as if a tour of pleasure had been before them, instead of a wandering into the Siberian desert, more than a thousand miles away.

He who has never seen a train of exiles, how they stagger along with trembling knees on the way to their far-off destination, chained by dozens to an iron pole, their countenances blanched with pain and privation, or distorted with the expression of despair,—knows not what it is to wander in such company from one end of the giant empire of the Czar to the other; with wounded feet and wounded heart: behind him

the desolated home, and before him a desolate future.

Six or twelve months, according to the distance of the place of banishment, form the usual duration of such a pilgrimage; where guilt travels by the side of innocence, vice by the side of virtue. Cossacks of the Don, or of the Ural, degenerate descendants of a chivalrous people, accompany, like bailiffs, the mournful train.

Who shall describe the several passages in the tale of woe which such a wandering comprises, and which depend on the caprices of men, of weather, and a hundred contingencies?

The roughest criminal excites compassion, when one sees him gagged like a wild beast and driven away to the ice-fields of Siberia; let any one imagine, then, in similar condition, a tender, softly-nurtured being, whose remembrances are all rooted in elegance and the graceful charms of home!

The young Countess bore the toils of the journey with a courage and endurance that might have shamed the stoutest man. She, who else had shunned each draught of air for fear of

taking cold, now joyously bid defiance to the rawest climate, and to all inclemencies of weather. Indeed, in general, a remarkably pliant energy dwells in the true Slavonian woman. The Russian history is rich in examples of ladies, belonging to the most distinguished princely families, who with sacrificing love have followed their consorts into banishment, and traversed the way to and from Siberia, without experiencing any essentially harmful consequences. I need only mention here the names of Trubetzkoi and Dolgorucki.

The young Countess came fresh and healthful to her dreary place of banishment, whilst her father had borne the hardships of the way with less impunity. Directly after their arrival he became so dangerously ill, that she was fearful for his recovery. She tended him with the most affectionate care, but the strength of the old man was broken, and although the immediate danger was happily removed, there remained but little hope of his perfect restoration.

His daughter, in her disconsolate situation, addressed herself to an aged female relative of

rank, residing at Petersburg, and reputed to have great influence at court. The letter especially sought to show that the old Count was quite innocent of the crime for which he had been condemned, since he had never taken an active part, of his own will, in the revolution, and that it would therefore be regarded as a great favour to have the case once more investigated with strict impartiality.

The letter was written with all the warmth and eloquence of tender, child-like love, and did not fail in its effect on the old lady at St. Petersburg, although the results were rather long to wait for, as, on account of the great distance of the place of banishment from the capital, could not have been otherwise.

The Emperor had no personal animosity at all against the Count; and, without any great difficulty, therefore, was persuaded to give his consent that the grounds of the banishment should once more be subjected to a rigorous examination.

From time to time Inspection Commissioners, so called, consisting of young officers of rank

under the presidency of a senator or general, are sent out from the imperial city into the more distant provinces of the boundless empire, with the view of obtaining an exact knowledge of circumstances, of remedying old-standing evils, and of introducing new ameliorations.

Destiny willed that a short time after the above-mentioned letter had been received, such an Inspection-Commission was sent out to Siberia. The chief of this commission, Major-General Count Oppermann, Adjutant, and, as is maintained, at that time a special favourite of the Emperor—an opinion confirmed in some measure by the circumstance that the Count, then a young man of thirty, was already invested with so high an office—received direction thoroughly to re-examine the papers referring to the condemnation of the banished Pole; to compare their contents, there and then, with the oral statements of the exile; and to form his decision accordingly.

* * * * *

A long period for the impatience of suffering had elapsed between the time when the young Countess sent her letter to Petersburg, and the

time when the answer came; but the favourable contents of the answer made her quickly forget all the oppression of the past, and look forward with a countenance full of hope into the future. It was enough for her to have the assurance that, with the consent of the Emperor, a new investigation would be instituted; she was so firmly convinced of the innocence of her father, that in the issue of the investigation she discovered likewise the term of the exile.

The joyous and hopeful disposition of the daughter was not without its good effect on the father. The old man, who had long since prepared himself to find his grave in Siberia, saw new visions of a brighter future open before him, and endured the sufferings of the present with tranquillity and resignation; although the shocks of fortune he had encountered had too much shattered his constitution to leave him any chance of entirely recovering from their effects.

The journey of a Russian Inspection-Commission, notwithstanding the many and swift-footed horses which always stand at its command, proceeds at a tolerably slow rate. The company

forms a complete caravan, carrying bed, kitchen, and cellar, everything, in short, with it that belongs to the need and comfort of life. In the first place, the daily unpacking and packing at the stations occasions a considerable loss of time; but a still greater amount of time is spent in the observance of the numerous customary formalities. In every provincial town halt is made, visits are exchanged with the civil and military authorities, the curiosities seen, dinners given, and what more of such time-wasting formalities and amusements there may be, which, in the story of such journeys at the cost of Government, commonly form the most conspicuous features.

If the time went quickly to the gentlemen of the Inspection-Commission, it lasted all the longer to the poor exiles.

I once heard it related of a man who had lived ten years in gaol, that the three days which elapsed between the announcement of his release and the release itself, seemed longer to him than the ten years he had passed in imprisonment.

In like manner, with the poor exiles the minutes grew to days, the days to years, until at

last the long looked-for hour arrived that led Count Oppermann into the hut of the sick Pole.

The Count had already beforehand fully examined all the particulars of the accusation, and, therefore, needed no long time, by personal intercourse with the accused, to become confirmed in the favourable opinion he had previously formed.

The heart of the young Countess became light as it had not for a long time been, when the prospect drew so near of seeing her father again in freedom ;—but the heart of Count Oppermann became heavy as it had never been, when the day drew near in which he must part from the beautiful Polish maiden. At the very first sight the charming creature had made on him an indelible impression. His affection for her mounted to the most ardent passion when he saw her engaged in her domestic employments and cares. The womanly heroism with which she bore her hard lot, the loving self-sacrifice for her father, her gracefulness and physical beauty,—all this had surrounded the Count with a net of enchantment from which he could no more escape; and the nearer the hour of separation drew on, the

clearer he felt that it would be easier for him to live for ever with the fair Pole in banishment, than to part from her so soon.

He did what he could not help doing: he solicited her hand, and—she became his wife. So destiny willed it, that the ill-famed land whereon she had set foot amid so many gloomy prospects, and where she had lived through so many bitter hours, should become the paradise of her joy. The measure of her bliss was full; she knew that her father, on whom she hung with all her soul, was free; and she had the delicious consciousness of having made him, who had made her happy, happy in return.

She remained with her father at T—— until her husband had completed his Siberian circuit, and then, in the escort of both, entered on the long journey to Petersburg.

* * * * *

In the capital of the Russian Empire beautiful women are rare. So lovely and graceful a phenomenon as the young Countess Oppermann had not been seen for a long time in the saloons of St. Petersburg. It was therefore only natural

that she should draw on herself, in a high degree, the attention of the elegant world, and find admirers and adorers even to the steps of the throne. It was just as natural that, notwithstanding her unassuming modesty, she should excite the envy and jealousy of other ladies, who were less beautiful, but more coquettish than she.

Nay, there soon began to be whispered about here and there shrewd conjectures as to the peculiar motives which might have influenced Count Oppermann in bringing the investigation to so favourable an issue.

“When the daughter is so beautiful, it is easy to find the father innocent!” Such and similar remarks were not wanting; though no one ventured to declare them openly, so long as the Emperor deemed the Polish beauty worthy of his especial regard.

We will not here inquire into the reasons which occasioned the Emperor’s favour towards the fair Pole to be not of long duration.

The Countess belonged to those nobler female natures, who know how to sacrifice to their own

dignity, and to the happiness of their families, all other considerations, and whose ambition does not extend beyond the narrow domestic circle. But the less she troubled herself about others, the more others troubled themselves about her; and scarcely was it observed that her star was paling, when they already began to say with loud voice, what they had hitherto only ventured to whisper in secret. Nobody knew precisely the real cause of the sudden change in the Emperor's sentiments, but everybody found that the Emperor was right in suddenly changing his admiration of the fair Pole into disfavour. Only a very few knew the exact circumstances of the return of Count R. and his daughter from banishment, but everybody was convinced that Count Oppermann had effected the freedom of the old Pole, for the purpose of leading home his beautiful daughter; and that, therefore, it was only just and reasonable to submit the matter once again to a closer examination.

As, under such circumstances, may easily be foreseen, the investigation turned out this time to the disadvantage of the accused

We leave the sick old man to his unfortunate destiny, to which he soon fell a victim—and pursue the story of Count Oppermann, over whom the Emperor now poured out the full measure of his wrath. He was degraded, and sent to the Caucasus into banishment. The Countess, as faithful a wife as she had been a daughter, could not be persuaded to remain at Petersburg on the splendid conditions offered her. She preferred to follow her consort into exile, there to go through a new school of suffering and bitter experiences.

* * * * *

Several years after these events, we find Count Oppermann again colonel of the regiment of infantry stationed at Gori*. Various travellers, who have visited Georgia during the last thirty years (among others Karl Koch), make mention of him, and are warm in their praises of the hospitable reception which they found in his domestic circle, already then enlarged by the addition of

* The principal town of the Georgian district of the same name, where the Kartvelshian language, customs, and costume are preserved in their greatest purity.

several children. He would have been the happiest of men, could he have remained in this situation, where a charming home and a paradisiacal land afforded him compensation for the privations of exile. But fate had otherwise determined. On a circuit undertaken by the Emperor through his Caucasian provinces, his former adjutant again met his view, and he saw fit to remove him from Gori to Gelendshik, one of the unhealthiest nests of which the earth can boast.

Here meanwhile the Count has again been advanced to the rank of major-general; but the pernicious effects of the climate have already so ruined his health, that he will not hold out much longer. His residence here is a continual struggle against the evil fevers and liver-complaints which infest the coast, and which have frequently converted his house into a perfect lazaretto. Had he not this year sent the whole of his family to Kertsh before the commencement of the hot season, the poor woman, with her sick children, would have hardly lingered through the summer in Gelendshik, where men die away like flies.

* * * * *

I have repeated this story as shortly and simply as possible, without any poetical addition, and with the omission of many particulars which do not well belong to publicity.

Such pictures, drawn from real life, furnish the best conception of a country's condition. The account I have given embraces the principal points of what was told me in different places, and by different persons, of the fortune of Count Oppermann. In essential matters all these narrations corresponded, whilst on immaterial points sundry deviations were observable. According to one version, for instance, Count Oppermann was not sent to Siberia as Chief of an Inspection-Commission, but on purely military business; and according to another version, the Countess followed her father a second time into banishment to Siberia, and only returned to her consort after her father's death.

I subsequently became acquainted with the Countess at the house of the Governor of Kertsh, and found all that had been told me of her in high accord with the reality.

One saw in her countenance that she had suffered much, but at the same time that misfortune had only exerted on her an ennobling influence. Her beautiful, soulful eye, and the fresh, susceptible spirit which revealed itself on every occasion, caused her still to make the impression of a youthful appearance. I found, of course, that she carefully avoided speaking of her past life; but it struck me then as very remarkable, that on several occasions she spoke of the Emperor with an awe, which, connected with the story related above, went somewhat against my feelings.

Since then, however, I have had more frequent experience of the fact, that even men, whose happiness in life had been broken by similar fates, have come at last to grow confused in their own convictions.

The extent of the Russian Autocrat's power, although resting on immoral and unnatural foundations, has about it something so prodigious and superhuman, that the most obstinate resistance of the individual sooner or later breaks down before it, and defiance changes into mute submission, in gentler natures into awe.

CHAPTER VII.

AMONG THE CIRCASSIANS.—II.

OF all peoples with whom we have hitherto come into contact in our wanderings—of Russians, Cossacks, Georgians, Armenians, Persians, and Tartars—we have sought especially to contemplate the poetical side; and with the description of every land into which we have entered, one or two poetical remembrances have always been interwoven. It would be unjust if we were not to do the same with regard to the Circassians.

The following songs may at the same time give occasion, and partly of themselves contribute, to illustrate and complete our previous communications concerning the Circassian land and people; the materials here presented being always taken from actual life, and rooted, to the slightest figure, in Circassian soil.

I must, however, remark, to prevent misunderstanding, that the songs which I bring before the reader here in a western dress, are not such translations, faithful in word and verse, as, for example, the "Lay of the dread Czar Ivan Wasiljevitsh," and other poems, given in the first part of this work. For, first, the following songs have never been recorded in their own language, the Circassian idiom having no written characters; and, secondly, I understand as little of the Circassian language as all other travellers who have visited these lands before me.

The songs were translated for me by my Circassian friends into the Turkish language, which is current among all the priests and chieftains of the country. I noted down their contents exactly, and endeavoured, in the present imitation, to come as near as possible to the style in which I had heard them sung by the Circassians, when the ear was my only guide.

The historical origin of the Circassian lays is extremely simple. Every battle, every feast, every joyous or mournful occurrence, is glorified by song. And as event follows event, so also

the songs are successive; supplanting and obliterating each other; since they are never arrested and secured by the written word.

It happens, therefore, that the lays which are sung in this country seldom reach further than a generation back; each race being fondest of hearing its own glorification, and the Circassians having no need of the recollections of by-gone centuries to urge them to manly self-assertion in the present.

THE LAY OF MURAD.

The breath flies away
Of the fallen hero;
The blood of his veins
Gushes out and decays;
But never decays
The succession-extinguishing
Fountain of blood-revenge!

* . * * *

When Murad was slain
In the throng of the fight,
And the corpse of the hero,
The pride of Ubychistan,

Became the spoil of the foe ;
Then shrieked the fair women
In long mourning ranks,
And their bitter lamenting
Could find no end.

But the men of the tribe
Assembled themselves
Under the sacred oak,
In the gloom of the wood,
To take counsel together
For mutual deed.
And they sent off a message—
Six Delikanler*
Bearing it went—
To the chief of the Moscov
“ Give us back the body
Of our brother !
That we may lay him
In his native earth,
According to ancient use
And the holy rites of our land.”

But the chief of the Moscov,
Scornful and unjust,

* Delikan, a young Hotspur. Every robust young Circassian is called a delikan.

Bade the young horsemen

Quickly begone,

Carrying the message :

“ Not the corpse of your brother

Will I give you,

But of you yourselves

Will I corpses make ! ”

* * * * *

When the answer had been announced

In the council of Tamata *,

Then kindled with wrath of revenge

The face of each hoary head ;

And Jerynbük Bersek Bey,

The shield of Ubychistan,

Summoned the warriors straight to arms.

As from the clouds a lightning flash,

Leaped the battle-word flaming round †,

Firing the hearts of all.

But Islam Tshemek Bey,

The tongue of the Medzhiliz ‡,

* Elders.

† The Circassians in their consultations always form a circle.

‡ *i. e.* The most skilful and influential speaker in the council of arm-bearing men ; Medzhiliz meaning the council or assembly.

Spake monishing words
Of wisdom and moderation :
“ Nought is gained without toil and pains,
And what has failed at first
Oft succeeds the second time.
Even the fruit on the tree
Falls not unshaken down
Into the gardener's lap ;
And 't is not the wise man's part
To fell the whole tree down,
Because the fruit did not,
At the first shaking, fall.
Perhaps the foe refused
To youth's impetuous claim,
What to the elders' prayer
They will not refuse.
Once more to the Moscov
Send ye the message :
Give us back the body
Of our brother !
In turn we will give you
Twenty prisoners,
Whom we have made our spoil
From your warrior ranks,
Twenty men living
For one dead !
And if they still refuse

Granting our just request,
Then may the sword achieve
What is denied the word !
Draws the hero the sword
Not without forethought—
Not without forethought
Sheathes it again ! ”

So spake Islam Tshemek Bey,
And scanned the circle round,
Whether none of the Tamata
Rising would answer in counter-speech.
But all were silent there,
Revering the hero's word.

And one of the youths
Sprang on his steed,
At the signal given
For the breaking up of the Medzhiliz,
Rode slowly the circle round,
And declared aloud
The counsel of Islam Tshemek ;
Then galloped away,
And all the others followed him.

* * * * *

Six elders they chose
To carry the message

To the chief of the Moscov :
“ Give us back the body
Of our brother,
That we may lay him
In his native earth,
According to ancient use,
And the holy rites of our land.
We offer as ransom
Twenty prisoners,
Twenty men living
For one dead !”

And the chief of the Moscov
Smiling gave answer :
“ That must a famous dead man be,
Who the elders themselves,
The chiefs of the people,
Moves to come to my camp—
Such a dead man is worth a higher price !”
And he spake the words
With a haughty scorn,
That the elders themselves,
Who carried the message,
Waxed into fury
And grim wrath all.

And when the tidings resounded
In the council of men,

Then was Islam Tshemek Bey
The first to summon to battle :
“ The dead must be ours !
In streams of red blood flowing,
He shall swim to us.
By battle and ruin
We 'll blot out the shame
That a hero of ours
Lies in the foeman's earth ! ”

Without any answer,
Flashed out the gleaming
Blades of the shashkas,
Flashed out the fiery
Looks of the dark eyes
Of the listening men.

Around wide spread the tidings,
And from near and far
Warriors hastened hither
On their nimble steeds.
And they assembled themselves
By the streams of the Ssotsha,
A thousand strong.
Here took they rest,
Until midnight was past.
Securely defended,

• Tarried the steeds
In the gloom of the woods.
• And the boldest men
Stole on before,
By secret paths,
Through thicket and chasm ;
Musket and shashka
Made fast on their backs
And covered with felt,
That no rattle or clang
Might reveal their approach.

And when they came to the place
Where the mountains flatten,
And the woods become thin,
And already the roar of the sea
Is audible to the ear,
Then down they dipped
Into the tall grass,
Creeping like serpents
Over the damp earth,
Unobserved by the peering
Guards of the Moscov.

And now they were close
By the fortress' ramparts,
Loosing their weapons,
And making ready for fight,

When the first morning-red
Broke through the clouds.

Hark ! a shrill whistling,
A shimmer of lights—
The fortress is roused—
And around now it flashes,
And thunders and crashes
Far o'er the mountains,
So that the earth
Shakes with the dreadful din.
But effectless flew
The thundering fiery vomit.
Sheer over the heads
Of the approaching host
Leaped the balls, and struck
Into far wood-thicket
And green hill-breast.
Jerynbük Bersek Bey,
The tall, broad-shouldered hero,
And Islam Tshemək Bey,
The hero of eagle-eye,
Led the warriors on to the charge.
And a clashing and slaying began,
That the earth reeked warm with blood ;
And a wailing and groaning arose between,
Like the jackal-howl in the rocky glen.

And when the sun in the heaven stood,
And crimsoned the sky with his burning flame,
Beat no Moscov heart
In the fortress more.
Many had fled
Forth to the sea,
When that their valiant leader had fallen,
One of the last of the slain ;
He fell under Jerynbük Bersek's hand,
His head dashed through
By a furious shaska-stroke.

Some hastily seized
What of powder-barrels,
And armour, and shot
Could be found in the fortress,
And drove the cattle away ;
The others meanwhile
Dug up the earth around,
And sought for the corpse
Of the slain Murad Bey ;
They found his shirt of mail,
His kama, and war-coat, hung
As spoil on the wall
In the dwelling of Moscov Bey ;
But him they found,
Pierced through and through,

In a fresh-made grave,
Hard by the strand of the sea,
Overstrewed with yellow sand.
Loud jubilation rose
Because of the treasure found.
And they wrapped the body
In white apparel.

Then fire was set
To the fort of the Moscov;
And with the rich booty
They hastened away,
To the thicket of woods.
And when they came to the place
Where Murad was slain,
There remained they standing,
To pray to Allah
For the health of his soul.

* * * *

They washed the blood from their sword-blades,
And the shame from their race!
And when they sat and took rest
By the streams of the Ssotsha,
And the drink of the busa,
Intoxicating the senses,
Round in a circle went,
Then gloried the champions aloud

In the might of their deeds ;
He who had slain the most
Was full the most of his glory.

Basmursa, a youth,
One of the sent Delikanler,
Spoke scorning of Moscov Bey,
Who boasted that he would make
Of the champions corpses all,
And now himself as a corpse
In the fire was singeing.
But Islam Tshemek Bey
Cast an angry look
On the champion young :
" Ill becomes such mouth
Scornful derision !
Moscov Bey, the fallen,
Stood in the fight like a hero,
Until Jerynbük struck him down.
His death was fuller of honour
Than thy scornful derision.
The hero honours the hero,
And never derides the dead ! "

Basmursa was kindled
To anger and shame ;
But in silence he sank

On the earth his eye ;
For he who rebuked
Was his own Atalik*.
And Jerynbük Bersek Bey
Summoned the heroes to go :

“ Let us preserve the spoil,
And keep for triumph at home
The joy of the victory gained !
Hundreds were needed to die
To atone for the death of one,
Yet the one was worth
More than the hundred far ! ”

* * * * *

And they made a great feast there ;
Thirty oxen were slaughtered,
And a hundred sheep ;
And for three weeks lasted
The festal grief of the guests,
And the screams of the mourning women.

* Atalik—fosterfather. The sons of the Circassians are not brought up by their parents, but are given, when yet quite young, into the care of an atalik, with whom they remain until their marriage.

THE LAY OF ASSLAN BEY.

In the water are mirrored the mountains of Dzhigethistan,
In the song is mirrored the fame of her heroes—

The foaming busa rejoices the heart,

Rejoices it more the fame of the hero.

The eagle drinks strength from the fresh mountain-spring,

The hero new life from the songs of the minstrels.

From tiny millet grain,

From the honey the little bee has made ready,

The drink of the busa is brewed,

That masters the might of the mighty;

From poor minstrel breast streams the fountain of song

That glorifies deeds of the hero.

From foul waters no sweet drink can be brewed,

From rank flowers no sweet scent can arise,

And of evil deeds no sweet lay can be sung.

But thy deeds, O Asslan Bey! are mirrory pure

As the sword wherewith thou begirded thy loins.

Therefore sing we gladly thy hero-fame,

Therefore praise we loudly thy wisdom in council;

For what would even thy deeds avail

If they lived not forward in songful sound?

They would vanish away as the bodies of the foe

Whom thou hast slain in the open fight.

* * * * *

Great was the joy in the land of Apsua,
When Asslan Bey led home Ezma,
The daughter of Moab, of the race of Pshu.
Many stately guests were assembled,
The bravest men of Apsua;
All who with him had fought in mutual fight
Rejoiced there with him in mutual joy.

Where two rivers are mingling,
There are the waters rushing and springing
Louder and higher than elsewhere :
Where two hearts are uniting,
To become one,
There, there is joy in the house,
And the guests are in jubilee dancing.
So it befell when Asslan Bey
Espoused Ezma, the daughter of Moab.
Great was the number of guests assembled,
And great the number of presents brought ;
Hundreds of sheep and goats
And fat oxen filled the wide court-yard.
Carpets, calico, linen, and silken stuffs
Were displayed in the chambers for show ;
And beside them whole sacks full of meal and salt,
And many rich marriage presents more.

Before the houses the youths were prancing
Around on slender-thighed, sure-footed steeds ;

Now riding in circles, now towards the far goal,
Now for mock fight parted in combating bands.
Endless was the number of dishes,
When the banquet began ; endless the number
Of slaughtered sheep, of game, and of fowl.

Many brimmers were drained of busa and arka * ;
And as oft as the health of the lady was pledged,
The newly-married, the Sun of the banquet,
A joyful firing of guns resounded.
No powder was spared in honour of the house ;
And many an eloquent word was spoken
In honour of the lady, the newly-married.

She wore on her arms bracelets of silver,
And down to her girdle silver breast-jewels,
Which had been by her mother and grandmother worn,
And carefully cherished and well preserved,
So that one day the daughter might wear them again.

And when now the dance, the round dance began,
How defiant and proud showed the youths therein,
And how handsome the maidens in festal array !
With the large wide trousers, the narrow anteri †,
And the striped little caps on their braided hair.

* A kind of brandy.

† Gowns.

Each the hand on the other's shoulder lays,
And so round they whirl at a measured pace*.

Lovely are the long-haired maidens all,
But the bride is of all the loveliest one !
Rich and worthy are the gifts of the guests,
Richer, worthier still are the eloquent words
Spoken o'er the carousal in honour of the pair.

Therefore turned all eyes on the minstrel old,
When he entered late the festal hall.
He could not return their joyous looks,
For he was blind long years ago ;
He brought no presents with him, and yet
Of all the guests most welcome was he.

And they made ready for him the softest seat,
And regaled him with choicest food and drink.
And all in a circle assembled round him,
When to sing he began of Asslan Bey,

* Always the most unfavourable moment in which to see a Circassian. The dance is not the bright side of the Circassians. Every people has its unfavourable moments, wherein it appears extraordinarily stupid ; as, for example, the German when he shaves, the Russian when he prays, the Circassian when he dances. The poor maidens often run the risk of being bruised at this amusement.

And of Ezma, the Chanum*, the Sun of the banquet.
And the tale of his own life sang he too,
Of his own young days and warlike deeds;
For he was a hero once in the battle of men,
The most dreaded foe of the Shagiréy.
He drove their oxen and sheep away,
And destroyed them oft in many a combat;
And they laid wait for him, and took him,
And put out his eyes.
And he stayed in the land of the Shagiréy,
Until Asslan Bey, the mighty hero,
Marched over the land of the foe with war,
Burned down their houses, ravaged their fields,
Drove away their fat herds of oxen and sheep,
And set blind Azamat free.

* * * * *

Thus still sat the blind old bard and sang,
And told the tales of the years that were gone;
When suddenly all from his lips turned away
To the court beyond: whence there came a sound
Of the trampling of steeds, and the clashing of arms,
And the noise between of bewildered voices:
“Moscov gjaldi!” the Russians are there!
Two horsemen had brought the tidings,
And marked the way that the foe had taken:
Still the Moscov were full an hour’s ride off.

* Mistress.

The women and children were placed in safe guard,
And Asslan Bey mounted with all the horsemen,
To meet the Moscov in nightly battle.
They had news received of the festal meeting,
It had been in secret to them betrayed,
And in darkness of night they were stealing hither,
To work a cowardly secret surprise.
They thought themselves sure and unobserved,
And now they themselves were to be surprised !
By dark hidden paths Asslan Bey led on
His band of horsemen in three divisions.
First, along the woody banks of the Pshuszu,
Until where the stream into two arms parts
In its hurried course to the Black Sea down.
Two horsemen then were sent on before,—
Keen-eyed, swift Delikanler,
The foe to espy, and tidings to bring.

When all now fully had been announced,
Asslan Bey puts in ambush two of his troops,
Concealed in the woods on each side of the way ;
With the third he attacks the foe in front,
And after a short fight flees before them.
The Moscov follow with tempest-speed,
And fire on the flying horsemen far.
Then suddenly turns round Asslan Bey,
And a frightful killing and firing began.

The foe, on three sides at once assailed,
 Rush down in wild flight towards the river.
 The shouting horsemen press them behind,
 First discharge their long pistols on the foe,
 Make ready their arkans * then for capture,
 And full a hundred are seized and bound.
 Many Moscov found in the waves their grave,
 Many heads flew off by the shashka-strokes ;
 Only few escaped in wildest flight.

* * * * *

With rich booty laden the horseman returned,
 Great the jubilee was in the land of Apsua,
 And the joyous banquet began anew.
 Many fresh songs glorified Asslan Bey ;
 But the guests praised aloud Muraviev Bey †,
 Who had brought such rich gifts to the marriage !

* Arkan—a kind of noose which the Circassians always carry with them, and which they contrive, whilst yet at a distance, to throw with such skill that the Russian soldiers are caught in the same way as wild horses are taken in the Steppe.

† General Muraviev, one of the bravest Russian officers, formerly Commander-in-Chief on the Circassian coast.

THE LAY OF AZAMAT.

Hail to the land
Where songful minstrels
Preserve in their sayings
The wisdom of the fathers,
And praisingly glorify
The deeds of the heroes,
To the sound of the strings !
Hail to such land !
Its fame shall never go down.

* * * *

Thee we remember, O Azamat,
Blind minstrel of Tshoma !
At every feast we remember thee,
Who wast every feast's adornment !
Well is it meet
That he, who so many
In song did glorify,
Now should himself
In song be glorified !
For better still than the hero's fame
Is the fame of the minstrel :
The hero can only make die,
The minstrel makes live !
Thee we remember, O Azamat !
Blind was thine eye,

And yet thou sawest deeper
Into the hearts of men
Than all seers !

* * * *

Whom all the women loved,
Whom all the men adored,
Who was the pride of our race,
The blind minstrel is dead !
Who so many heroes sang to their graves,
For him now resounds the song of the grave !

When he sat in the hall,
And played and sang
Of the deeds of the heroes
Of the tribe of Apsua;
Then sounded each string
Like a ringing sword,
And his mighty voice
Like a storm in the rock-ravine.
With eager desire for battle,
With thirst for fame and plunder,
The hearts of the men beat high.
And when he began to sing
The wonders of Oshga*,
The tales of the olden time,
Then, for joy and sadness,

* Elboruz.

Filled with tears
The eyes of the maidens.

Azamat himself was
Like to the mountain—
His head was white
As the summit of Oshga;
His heart was golden;
His songs poured forth,
Fertilizing among us,
As the fresh waters gush
From the fountains of Oshga.

Hail to the race
To whom he belonged,
To the race of Pshu!
Where he lies at rest
In the sacred earth.

* * * * *

Out of a lightning-blasted,
Holy oak tree
His coffin was hollowed.
And they dug his grave
In a clear wood space
By the streams of the Dzub.
For eight days lasted
The screams of the mourning women;

But the grief of his friends
Will last for ever !

In secret steal
The women and maidens
To the spot in the woods,
And bestrew with flowers,
And bedew with tears,
The minstrel's grave.

SONG OF THE MOURNING WOMEN.

Was not thy step yet firm and proud?
Wherefore shouldst thou have died ?

Aiarira !

Was not thy face yet fresh and ruddy?
Wherefore shouldst thou have died ?

Aiarira !

Wast thou not tended and cherished abundantly?
Wherefore shouldst thou have died ?

Aiarira !

And did not all love thee, young and old?
Wherefore shouldst thou have died ?

Aiarira !

&c., &c.

* * * *

In this manner the mourning song is often continued for half an hour together, before the women come to an end in their enumeration of the good qualities and pleasantnesses of the dead. The mournful note *Aiarira*, concluding each verse, and corresponding nearly with the Turkish *Aman!* the German *Ach! Ach!* (*alas! alas!*), is uttered with so lengthened an accent, that it might seem to consist of four words: *Ai A Ri Ra.* The custom of addressing such inquiries to the dead prevails not only among the Circassians, but also among the remaining peoples of the coast, Abchasians, Mingrelians, Gurians, &c.

ISMAÏL AND DAREDZHAN.

A horse to ride,
A weapon to wield,
A woman to love—
These are the wants of man !

The ripe fruit waits for the plucker's hand,
For the suitor's waits the marriageable maiden ;

The fruit, which no plucker
Approaches to pluck,
Falls at last of itself
From the fruit tree down ;
The maid, whom no wooer
Approaches to woo,
Flies at last of herself
From her home-hearth far.
But fruits there are also
Hard to be reached,
And loveliest damsels
Of proud and unbending mood.
Such a one wast thou,
Most beauteous Daredzhan !
Skilful in sewing,
At spindle and loom,
In preparing food,
And in household care ;
Full of all charms,
And all embellishing arts !

The house of the father
Stood open to all,
The heart of the daughter
To all was closed.
How many soever sued
For the love of Daredzhan,

She disdained them all !
Until Ismaïl came,
The hero of Mdzymta,
Whose fame far and wide
In the land had sounded,
Since he late in the fray
With the grim Muraviev Bey,
When already all was lost,
All had again regained,
And brought the foe to submission.
He raged in the fight
As erst Islam Gerai,
The son of Indar Oglu,
At the streams of the Pshat,
When, being accused
By the Moscov of treason,
Without any answer
Into the camp of the foe he broke,
And took their leader
Living and captive bound.

The valiant Ismaïl,
The dread of the foe,
Whose courage had never been shaken,
Whose countenance never had quailed
Before danger and death,
Became shy and embarrassed

At the first sight
Of the beauteous Daredzhan.
And she blushed herself
As she never had done
Before glance of man;
And with her eyelash,
The maidenly veil of shame,
Hid the glow of her dark eye,
When Ismaïl before her stood,
As tall and mighty,
And yet softly trembling,
As a fir-tree on Elboruz,
Dizzily looking down
Into the blooming vale.

Rich was his dress,
Of brown colour,
With silver girdle.
On the kama broad,
With ivory handle
And leaf-green sheath,
Shone, inlaid in gold,
A verse from the Koran,
As a sign the free man knew
Himself from his foes to defend,
And Allah to honour!

To the father of Daredzhan,
 The hoary Omar Oglu,
 Ismaïl was an acceptable son.
 They were soon agreed
 On the kâbin* and wedding-day,
 And Ismaïl departed,
 Soon to return.

And now there was weaving,
 Embroidering, sewing,
 And all preparing
 In the house of Omar Oglu,
 For the bride-dress of Daredzhan.
 Three little caps of scarlet cloth,
 With silver stripelets ;

* Kâbin, the purchase-price. Among the Circassians the bridegroom must buy the bride of her father. A maiden here is never endowed with a fortune. Her sole portion consists of clothes and ornamental articles. A speculation marriage is in this country a thing completely unknown. The worth of a damsel is estimated according to her rank, her beauty, and her domestic virtues. When, therefore, among the Circassians it is said, the maiden is worth a thousand oxen, this is a very flattering phrase, but has quite the opposite signification of what the English intend when they say, for example, he is worth a million.

Five silken bodices,
 With silver spangles
 And shining girdles;
 Shalvari and underdress,
 Woven of red and blue;
 The over garment of velvet;
 The shoes of morocco,
 Prettily figured;
 The linen raiment, the kasmak*;
 All of them lay prepared,
 In plenty and profusion,
 Before the day arrived
 Of the marriage of Daredzhan.

* * * * *

In heaven the stars are sparkling,
 The moon on the mountain shines,
 And mighty shadows downward
 Into the green vale creep.
 There is silence o'er wood and hill;
 Only the distant jackal-wail
 And the gushing water-purl
 Sound through the stilly night.
 But suddenly from afar
 Sounds the loud tramp of hoofs!

* Veil. On their entrance into wedlock the women put on the veil.

Six horsemen trotting come,
Six horsemen and seven steeds :
The sixth at his side is leading
The seventh steed by the rein.
And where the valley ends,
At the foot of Temirdagh,
Before Omar Oglu's house,
There the horsemen halt.

There's a stirring and running within,
A gleaming of brands and torches,
Yet opens never a door
For the guests to enter in.
Are they foemen who have come
The old man's house to storm ?
Are they spoilers who have come
The old man's daughter to rob ?
They fire and they rage,
And one springs from his steed
And into the dwelling breaks

Meanwhile, within the court
Other horsemen assemble themselves ;
The news runs through the aoul*,
And multiplied are the torches,
And multiplied are the warriors,

They rush on the mounted foe.
They are shouting, and shooting, and striking,
And with stamping of steeds,
And with cracking of shots,
Loudly resounds the vale.

In the house, in the women's apartments,
In bridal raiment dressed,
Bashfully sits a maid,
And weeps, and wrings her hands,
And laments aloud with her voice;
And lamenting around her stand
Other damsels there beside.
A warrior in full armour,
Of stately bearing, stands
Imploring before the virgin,
And seeks to take her with him.
She turns away from him,
And weeps, and wrings her hands,
And laments still ever louder,
And seeks to struggle from him.
Then clasps he with strong arms
The maiden's tender body,
And lavishes coaxing words,
And carries her as a child is carried
And carries her to the door.
Close by the door are waiting

A horseman and two horses.
He sets her on the war-horse,
With scarlet-red caparisons.
She seeks to struggle from him,
And laments still ever louder,
And at the lamenting hasten
The combating horsemen hither.
They wrestle and shout and fire,
And will not leave the maiden.

Ismail was the warrior
Who carried the fair bride off.
He brandishes his strong arms,
Dispenses many a blow,
And the horsemen who with him came,
They faithfully help him too;
The clashing and firing end.
In the courtyard all is still.

* * * * *

Six horsemen strong are trotting
Along the verdant vale.
The sixth by the rein is leading
A war-horse gaily decked,
With scarlet-red caparisons.
And on the war-horse sits
The beauteous Daredzhan;

No longer now lamenting,
She beams with bliss and rapture !
The streamlets of her tears
Are dried up in the dimples
Of her chin and glowing cheeks !
The wringing of her hands
Has changed to loving clasps ;
The grief-tone of her lips
Dissolves itself in kisses !

Thus is it Heaven's decree :
Man shall by earnest striving
Obtain the joy before him,
That, without strife, no worth has.
To the pain-strife of the mother
Follows the birth of the child—
To the strife of the battle-field
Follows victory and the revel—
To the strife of the nuptial day
Follows loving recognition.

* * * *

A star arose in house of Ismail.
Ere, on the following eve,
The Heaven adorned itself with its stars,
Daredzhan is become the mistress of the house !
And torches flash in the festal hall,
And many proud guests are assembled.

The old sit apparelled in warlike array,
While the young in the dance are whirling round,
The frolic youths and the slender maidens;
And loud joy resounds through the festal time.
Thou alone lookest dark and dim, O Azamat!
Art thou thinking back on thine own young days,
And all thy misfortunes, blind old man?
Thy fair bride died ere thou ledst her home;
In the damp prison-air thine eye was quenched,
When it scarce had thrown its first free glance
O'er the beautiful world of God!

I have laboured with care to present these songs in the simplest possible dress, without any addition of artistic versification and fine-sounding rhymes. I was afraid, by whatever attempt at embellishment, to injure the character of the whole; whilst, on the other hand, I felt convinced that no real poem of pith and substance essentially suffers by the absence of rhyme.

In an earlier work*, more fully occupied with the ethnography and history of the Caucasian

* The People of the Caucasus. A Contribution to the recent History of the Orient. Frankfort on the Maine, Lizius.

isthmus, I have given one or two examples of the national poetry of the Circassians in verse and rhyme, so that the reader himself can judge which is the better mode of imitation.

Let us now, in unrestrained discourse, endeavour by some general statements to complete the information which the reader may have drawn from these poetical contributions concerning the Circassian land and people.

The condition of the tribes, hostile to Russia, that inhabit the provinces lying between the Kuban and Black Sea, takes us back to the very beginnings of human society. Here there is no State, in our sense of the word — no long-descended princely house, possessing greater power than any other house; no government by the grace of God or man; no official rank, no police, no standing army, no caste living at the cost of others—nothing, in short, at all of what in Europe is held indispensably necessary to the maintenance of political prosperity and to the settlement of hopeful sons.

The foundation of social order among the Circassians is the clan-life, as it has existed

among them for thousands of years in almost unaltered form. The single tribes, originally developed from single families, have grown by degrees to perfect states (in size and population), without ever feeling the need of regulating their affairs otherwise than according to old-established usage. Never was a written law prevalent in this country; writing, indeed, to the present day, being here a rare art, of which, even among the most distinguished of the people, only a few can boast. The sole universally recognised law, indwelling in the individual, and extending over the whole tribe, is the law of mutual help.

The family ties are scarcely so strong among us as those which entwine around the population of a whole Circassian tribe. Such a tribe (*tokum*), notwithstanding the internal connection of its members and the solidarity of its interests, does not, however, of necessity form a locally-united whole. The single constituents of a tribe may dwell scattered about all over the land; they are held together by the oath taken on their entrance into the union, and by the great advantages arising to them from this union. If,

for example, a member of the tribe Tshikapu is robbed, injured, or murdered by a member of the tribe Pshu, the tribe Pshu is answerable, as a body, for the crime committed, and both tribes remain at feud, until the misdeed is atoned for according to established usage, *i. e.* until a penalty corresponding to the offence is paid. This penalty commonly consists in the surrender of a certain number of oxen determined by the greatness of the crime. For slaying a man, the tribe to whom the murderer belongs has to deliver up two hundred oxen; for slaying a woman, one hundred oxen; for carrying off a maiden, twenty-five oxen. In a similar way a penalty is fixed for every offence. In doubtful cases the question is decided by an oath-court, composed of twelve persons, the six eldest of whom are men of blameless lives chosen from each tribe. Great respect is associated with the dignity of a sworn man, which likewise includes in itself the office of judge; and no one to whom the slightest stain attaches is admissible to this dignity. The decision of the sworn men is held sacred by the people, and they have power of

life and death over the accused when their verdict is unanimous. Wilful murder is commonly punished, apart from the penalty to be paid by the tribe, with death. The execution consists in fastening a heavy stone round the murderer's neck, and hurling him into the sea. Owing to the very obligation of a tribe to answer for each of its members, a keen mutual oversight prevails among them, which is more effective than the best system of police, and the carrying out of which is rendered all the easier as the Circassians never dwell together in large communities. Their largest aouls are scarcely equal in population to our smallest villages. It happens, therefore, that the inhabitants of an aoul are always intimately acquainted with the circumstances of each other's property and possessions; and the increase of a household's cattle, sheep, and horses (the common objects of robbery) can never remain a secret long.

If, however, it happens that the clan is unable to find out the criminal, or makes objections to paying the required penalty, every member of the clan is considered an accomplice, and remains

exposed, during the pending of the cause, to insult and ill-treatment of all kinds. Not only, then, must he carefully beware of setting foot in a hostile aoul, but in every third place where he meets with a warrior of the injured clan, a bloody scene is almost sure to follow.

The clan is answerable for the individual, and the individual for the clan. The injury as well as the satisfaction always comes to the account of the common clan-union. Expiation is made, not by the criminal, but by his innocent fraternity. Satisfaction is received, not by the injured party, but by the tokum to which he belongs.

Only in times of great scarcity, or in the case of old hereditary feuds, does it happen, that a tokum long delays the payment of the recognised debt. The same, too, doubtless occurs sometimes, when a large clan is opposed to a smaller and weaker. But such cases are rare exceptions, and then the private blood-revenge supplies the place of the clan-justice. In general, the criminal system of the Circassians has always proved itself very effective, and the mutual barring of houses

and stables, from fear of robbery, is in this country altogether unknown. The simple reason that the men of one brotherhood are for the most part well acquainted with each other, enables them commonly to make short process with those who bring the clan into serious inconveniences.

The social relations of a tokum rest entirely on communist principles. Not that (as of old was attempted among the Jews, Persians, Romans, and other races) a regulated division of property takes place; but the possessors of property are bound to help the non-possessors in time of need. If a house is burned down, the neighbours must build it up again. If the enemy has laid waste all the dwellings and fields of an aoul, the clan-community must repair the damage. If a poor Circassian wishes to marry, and has not the means of buying the bride from her parents, his fellows must find him the means.

The public affairs of the tokum are always discussed in a medzhiliz (council of the people), under the open sky. Every free man has a right of taking part in the consultations. Gene-

rally, however, a representation here takes place; the acknowledged wisest and bravest men being chosen from the midst of the people, and allowed to have oversight and rule unhindered, so long as it is manifest they do not act against the advantage of the clan.

Since the introduction of Islam into this country, it has been the custom in the peoples' councils, as well as in the oath-court, for at least one learned Kadi to be present, to explain the institutes of the Koran in application to the case in question. This, however, exercises little influence on the decisions of the Tamata; the old custom of the country being always held to be still more sacred than the Koran. Use is stronger than religion, and, where the two meet in conflict, the former invariably comes off victorious. The Circassians endeavour all the more to be good Mohammedans, as Christianity has become so hateful to them through the Russians; notwithstanding, they lay little stress on the Mohammedan festivals, whilst they observe with great scrupulousness the feasts of their old deities, Shibl , Tleps, Sseosseros. This may no doubt

be chiefly explained from the circumstance, that their old heathen holydays, in contrast with the Islamitish, wear a prevailingly cheerful expression, and are connected with great animal-sacrifices, merry-makings, and feastings.

For just as great as the endurance with which the Circassian bears privations of all kinds when necessity requires it, is, on the other hand, his inclination for the joyous banquet. In the field, the warrior takes a handful of raw millet and a draught of fresh spring water, contented, without murmuring; but at home, in the circle of friends, he readily regales himself with good roast meat, with pilav, with busa, and arka, and with the many sweet pastries and messes peculiar to the country, prepared of maize, millet, and honey. Vegetables of all kinds, though the land is admirably fitted for their cultivation, are as much forbidden and hated among the Circassians as swine's flesh. Roast meats and sweet-breads are always and everywhere the chief constituents of the repast. Just as among the Georgians and Armenians, what is left in the dishes is immediately, on changing them, eaten by the servants,

partly standing, partly sitting down, one after another, in a corner of the room.

Occasion for great festive gatherings is given especially by the medzhiliz, by the gaining of a victory, as well as by every joyous and mournful family event.

Every Circassian has his own house, to which a little out-building or guest-house is always attached, where every stranger finds at all times friendly reception, food, and lodging. The hospitality of the Circassians is world-famed, and deserves, indeed, the mention of praise; though it differs in no essential respect from the hospitality of the other mountain-races of the Caucasus, except in being more restrictive, which existing relations of course require. Among the neutral tribes, or those which are friendly with the Russians, such as the Kabardians, Ossets, Tushians, &c., any one can find a hospitable reception, without thereby putting the kunak into great embarrassment; but the hostile Circassians must strictly see to it that, under the protection of hospitality, no spies or Moscovitish emissaries steal into the land, as has already repeatedly hap-

pened. I need only call to mind the two German names Tausch and Thurnau. Tausch, a common fellow, who suffered himself to be employed by the Russians for any purpose for the sake of gain, came off, as the course of things so often is, with sound skin, whilst Baron von Thurnau, a distinguished Russian officer, lived for nearly three years in mournful captivity among the Abazechians.

After having, by a residence of some years along the line of the Kuban, as well as on the eastern coast of the Black Sea, become familiar with the costume and manners of the Circassians, Baron Thurnau, in complete Circassian guise, and accompanied by a native friendly with Russia, penetrated into the interior of the land, for the purpose of examining the territory, and of projecting plans as the basis of future operations. Various circumstances contributed to enable the Baron to remain for a long time unrecognised in the country. First, his whole frame of body had a strikingly Circassian aspect; secondly, he had, with great predilection and thoroughly Russian imitativeness, lived into the

Circassian peculiarities; and lastly, he played the part of a deaf and dumb man, in order, on the one side, to avoid the danger of betraying himself by ignorance or bad pronounciation of the idiom of the country; and, on the other, to draw advantage from the special esteem which deaf and dumb persons, as well as blind, enjoy in this land.

Notwithstanding all these precautionary measures and favourable circumstances, and, indeed, in consequence of the clan-regulations above described, the secret object pursued, and the artful character sustained by Baron Thurnau, could not for any length of time escape the keen glance of the Circassians. He was recognised and exposed by an Abazechian chief, his papers and instruments were taken away from him, and he had to expiate his boldness by long years of grievous captivity among the half-wild tribe of the Abazechians, until another chief, who had fallen out with his clan-associates, and was going over to the Russians, set him at liberty, on the promise of a large recompense, and intercession with the Emperor. Great was the joy in the Russian

camp, when the captive whom they had long given up for lost, made his appearance at Tiflis. He did not, however, tarry long there, but set off with his follower on the way to Moscow, where, on his arrival at the house of Herr von Neidhart, then Governor-General, I became acquainted with him. He looked frightfully injured and emaciated; and though, by a journey which he soon afterwards undertook, at imperial costs, to a watering-place in Germany, his strength was somewhat renewed, he will carry the traces of his suffering with him to the grave.

A year later, when Herr von Neidhart had received the command-in-chief of the Caucasian army, I again met Baron Thurnau at Tiflis, where he still resides as colonel in the Russian service. According to all I learned from him, as well as from Glebov (whose capture is related in the first part of this work), the Circassians, whether of the provinces within or beyond the Kuban, are not in the habit of treating their Russian captives with remarkable tenderness. For fuller appreciation of this, I have given at the end of the book, among the Appendices, a

letter which Glebov wrote, when in captivity, to a relative, Colonel Bibikov, and of which, after his liberation, he himself supplied me with a literal copy. Another copy of this letter exists among the State papers of the Russian staff at Tiflis⁴.

For the rest, such ill-treatment only befalls exceptionally those persons from whose ransom the Circassians expect considerable gain. In order to accelerate their ransom, the residence of the captives is made as unbearable as possible. Special stress, moreover, is only laid on the capture of distinguished military men, whose liberation, notwithstanding the Emperor's prohibition, sooner or later follows. Certain it is, that most of the common soldiers captured by the Circassians show no desire whatever to return into the Russian camp.

A harmless traveller, unless a particular suspicion rest upon him, will never run into great danger among any of the Circassian tribes. On my wanderings through the mountains, I visited several aouls in Little Kabardah, and was everywhere received with hospitality, without meeting

with the slightest misadventure. My subsequent fellow-traveller, Henry Seymour, resided still longer among the Kabardians, and, on his return, could only speak of them with praise. The Kabardians, indeed, belong for the moment to the neutral tribes, inasmuch as the Russians, by their fortresses, and by the military road running along the banks of the Terek, are close upon their rear; yet among no people of the Caucasus is hatred of the Russians more deeply rooted than here, notwithstanding the great exertions of the Emperor to gain over the proud chiefs of Kabardah to his interest. This land, as is well known, was that from which the Russians derived their first so-called legitimate claim to the possession of the Caucasus. Czar Ivan Wasiljevitsh, the Cruel, had married the daughter of Temruk*, a Kabardian chief; and an expedition undertaken by the Russians, in the year 1717, against the Chan of Chiva, was commanded by Bekovitsh Tsherkaski, a Kabardian prince; from which grounds, a century later, the proof was

* *Vide* "The People of the Caucasus," where the whole history of the war is traced to its sources.

drawn that Kabardah had always made common cause with Russia, and, in fact, had always been a Russian province. Meanwhile the Kabardians have often proved to the Russians, sword in hand, that they will have nothing in common with them; and if they maintain for the moment a neutral position, it is only in expectation of a turn of affairs in favour of Shamyl. But this in passing.

Access to the Circassians on the coast is doubly difficult, because here the Russians play the part of mediator, and the mountain-tribes receive with just suspicion whatever comes from the Russians. Yet it is sufficient to have a trustworthy kunak to make one's way here also in every direction. The kunak answers with his head for the safety of the guest, if he has once eaten salt and bread with him, drunk with him the busa, and slept with him under one roof.

In the company of young Dzhigethian princes, who wished, through Swan Bey's interposition, to obtain a settlement at Petersburg, I made excursions from Ardiller, along the banks of the Mdzymta, and we frequently fell in with nume-

rous troops of Circassians, without a hair of our heads being injured. And yet my companions must have been doubly hateful to the hostile Dzhigethi, as having already taken their quarters in the Russian camp; but Swan Bey was too much esteemed in the land, on account of the energy he displayed in checking the famine, for any to have ventured to harm his guest-friends. The Shapszuch and Ubych, too, had frequent opportunities of capturing me if they had been so minded.

I had intercourse with several of the chiefs and effendis, among whom Bell and Longworth, on their adventurous journey along the coast, had dwelled, and was convinced that these gentlemen had left a very favourable impression, although the high opinion which the Circassians formerly entertained of the might of the English is pretty nearly obliterated, now that all hopes of effective aid from this quarter are seen to be idle. Guz Bey, surnamed the Lion of the Shapszuch, Keri Oglu Shamin Bey, Shimaf Bey, of the tribe of the Tshikapu, and several other of Longworth's hospitable entertainers, have, meanwhile,

in the strife with the Russians, met their fate. Many other mournful changes would Longworth find were he to return again to his friends on the coast. Of the Indur Oglus, two have gone over to the Russians, whilst their dwellings have been razed to the ground. Several other residences of renowned Circassians, pointed out in Longworth's work, have given place to Russian block-houses, and their old inhabitants been forced back into the interior of the country. But, above all, the famine produced by the exclusive system of the Russians has committed enormous ravages, and brought into misery members of the most distinguished families.

The Circassians have also, as is well known, their hereditary differences of rank, which, however, since the introduction of Islam, have been substantially effaced by the levelling institutes of the Koran. The arm-bearing men, so called in opposition to the slaves, who are not allowed to bear arms, are divided into three classes: Pshi (princes), Uzden, or Vork (nobles), and Tokav (freemen). The slaves, or bond-men, the great proportion of whom consists of captives taken in

war, are solely employed in cultivating the fields, in tending the cattle, and in performing the labours of house and stable.

The pshi and uzden formerly possessed great privileges, and stood in about the same relation to the rest of the people, as, among us, the princes and knights of the middle ages. The abuse they made of their power occasioned its being taken entirely from them; and, at the present day, they are distinguished from the tokav, or freemen, only by their inherited title. Nevertheless, the three classes are so far distinct from each other, as never to become intermixed by marriage. A pshi will never marry the daughter of an uzden, and an uzden never the daughter of a tokav. For the rest, however, the tokav stand in no sort of dependence on the princes and nobles. In the medzhiliz he wields the greatest influence who shows the most understanding and insight; and in times of war he is chosen for leader who has most distinguished himself by his courage and circumspection, without the least reference to rank and station. And of the pshi and uzden, those only stand in special esteem among the

people, who have specially signalized themselves through whole generations, in the medzhiliz and in the field. To such belong, for example, the families of Sefir Bey, Shimaf Bey, Selim Bey, Haoud Oglu Mansur Bey, and others.

It has frequently been maintained that the pshi and uzden wandered into the country some centuries ago, and form an entirely distinct race from the remaining population. A noble Arabian tribe is said to have settled down in Kabardah, where it mingled with the daughters of the land, and created a progeny far and wide renowned for its beauty. The Kabardians subsequently subdued the provinces between the Kuban and the Black Sea, and their nobles firmly seated themselves here as rulers. Their dominion was wrested from them in the course of years; they themselves, however, remain in the land to this day. So runs the tradition, in which there is, certainly, thus much truth, that the Kabardians are a thoroughly beautiful race of people, and that the princes and nobles of the Shapzuch, Ubych, and Dzhigethi, are very advantageously distinguished by their tall stature and

noble form of countenance, from the great mass of the people. Philological researches can here contribute little to the elucidation of the subject; the language of the Abchasians, Shapszuch, Ubych, and Kabardians, being, as Güldenstädt has already shown, daughters of one mother. The Arab and Turkish intermixtures, due to the Koran and its expounders, occur in equal proportion in all the provinces mentioned; the foreign names, too, most frequently occurring, as, for example, Ali, Muhammed, Moissohl (Moses), Cham-mursa (Dog-prince), Tamassa (Thomas), Dzhatemir, (Iron-soul), and others, are everywhere equally naturalized.

I have explained above how the clan-life of the Circassians is only an extended family-life; it scarcely ever, therefore, happens among the free classes that a man marries a female of his clan. This, where it does, in exceptional cases, take place, is considered a kind of incest. Accordingly, the women and maidens are much easier and freer in intercourse with their fellow-clansmen than with the men of a different clan.

In early times the wearing of the veil was

here quite unknown; the veil was also introduced with Islam. The maidens go unveiled until their marriage, and allow themselves, to a certain point, freedoms in their behaviour toward the other sex, such as are found in no other land. With the entrance into wedlock these freedoms cease. The veil, as it were, draws a wall of partition between the life of the virgin and that of the bride. From the day when she covers her face with the veil, the wife is the property of her husband, and her world is limited to his house. If her husband dies, his nearest relatives have a claim upon her. This claim, however, has reference to the person only, not the property. For, according to the institutes of the Koran, every woman has free property, whereof she can dispose agreeably to her own judgment. Altogether, too, the wife does not become by marriage the slave of her husband, but can accuse him, and even separate from him, if he injures her in her rights, which are strictly defined in the Koran. Nay, even the born female slave enjoys all the privileges of a free woman, as soon as she becomes a mother.

The Circassian females who, by means of the slave trade, seek their fortunes abroad, belong for the most part to the fourth class. The price of purchase is shared between the parents and the master. In like manner, the bondmen who practise a handicraft (armourer, matmaker, &c.) share their gains with their master.

The maidens of all classes are brought up at home; but the boys of the three free classes are entrusted from their earliest youth to the care of strangers, that they may not be spoiled by parental indulgence. When they are so far grown that they can saddle a horse and carry arms, they have to perform the service of page to their atalik (fosterfather), and during this time are called dzherat. The dzherat accompanies his atalik on all warlike expeditions, is instructed by him in riding, shooting, and other exercises, and remains with him until his marriage, which is also commonly brought about by the instrumentality of the atalik.

* * * * *

Just as I am on the point of closing this chapter, the news comes to me of the frightful oc-

currence in Inovraclav, where a troop of Circassians who had deserted to Russia have been cut to pieces in a manner that does little honour to the heads and hearts of the authorities concerned. All journals speak with righteous indignation of the cartel-contract, recalling the darkest times of the middle ages, which gave occasion to this deed of horror; whilst they extol the hero-spirit displayed by the Circassians on this occasion, as something unheard of for European conceptions. Considering the great and general interest which the courageously-fatal endeavour of the brave sons of the mountains has excited, I think I shall render a service to many a reader, if I here interweave the description of a similar event, which dates from the period of my residence in the Caucasus, and of which, at the time (1844), in my letters of travel to the "Allgemeine Zeitung," I made in its place a short communication.

The scene is the left bank of the Terek, on the border of the Tshetshenzian land, about thirty-five versts to the west of the spot where the Ssunsha, separating Little from Great Tshet-

shenja, discharges itself into the Terek. There, in the early part of the year 1844, at the opening of the campaign against Shāmyl, General von Neidhart had pitched his head-quarters, but was for a long time hindered in his operations by a multitude of adverse circumstances. First, the provision-supplies did not arrive at the right time; then the Terek overflowed its banks and flooded the encampment; in addition came the daring attacks of Shāmyl, whose sagacity knew how to profit by the embarrassment of the Russians; in short, each day was marked by new disasters, until at last, with the arrival of the provision-waggons, the operations began. Not long before this, it happened that an old Tshetshenz of sixty years was seized by the Cossacks on account of his suspicious-looking passport, and brought into Tshervlonnaja*, the principal encampment. The old Tshetshenz carried with him a watch, which the Cossacks wished to get from him, whether by purchase, or otherwise, I

* A Grebenshian-Cossack stanitza on the left bank of the Terek.

know not; he was, however, unwilling to part with it, and the Cossacks, for this reason, refused to give him to drink, although he was parched with a burning thirst, and had been obliged to run all day, in the heat of the sun, by the side of the horses, without receiving a draught of water.

Half-fainting with thirst the aged warrior reaches Tshervlonnaja, and is put in chains at the principal guard-house, where, besides him, are a few Cossacks, together with an Urjädnik (under-officer), who exercises the oversight and has the care of the writings. In the corner cowers the shackled Tshetshenz, apparently in deep sleep: at the table sits the Urjädnik busily writing; the weary Cossacks, in the sense of complete security, hang their weapons on the wall, prepare their night-quarters on the floor, and fall asleep.

The Urjädnik, who sees all around in deep slumber, rubs his sleepy eyes, and rises to get a little fresh air without. The strong air-current coming into the room through the opened door, extinguishes the light burning on the table, and

profound darkness suddenly reigns in the guard-house. The nightly stillness is only broken by the snoring of the Cossacks outstretched upon the floor. The old Tshetshenz, who was not asleep, but had only prudently closed his eyes, raises himself gently, steals cautiously with his shackles past the snoring guards, makes himself master of a dagger hanging on the wall, rushes furiously on the sleeping Cossacks, and begins a frightful bloodshed among them. One lies dead where he slept; the others, frightened up by the stabbings and death-rattles, reel to the door and cry out for help. The Urjädnik hears the cry, comes back to the room, and succeeds, in the darkness, in seizing the old man behind. But the Tshetshenz strikes and bites about him like a madman, and, during the struggle, fetches his opponent, a high-grown, strong-built person, seven wounds in the face, so that the latter is also obliged to seek his safety in flight. Before, however, looking further for help, he barricades the door, to render the Tshetshenz's escape impossible. A young Cossack, who took refuge on the stove, and has not dared to come down

again—his brother, whose body is swimming in blood—and the frightful Tshetshenz, who, in the meantime, has loosened his fetters with the serviceable dagger—are now alone in the room. In the darkness of the night, the old man does not observe the young Cossack; the latter holds his breath, and spends the night in an agony of mortal fear. Meanwhile the alarm is raised; the court rings with clamour; torches flash through the night; hundreds of Cossacks and soldiers surround the house on all sides. But the old man has pretty well composed himself, and already made provision for an obstinate defence. The firelocks and pistols hanging on the walls are loaded, and there is, besides, a considerable store of cartridges ready to hand. He slings a sabre round him, bars the door on the inside, and, prepared for action, awaits his foes. These, after various fruitless endeavours to bring the wild warrior forth, hold it advisable to wait until the break of day, in order, if possible, to take him alive. The day breaks. A Cossack, acquainted with the Tshetshenzian language, is sent to persuade the besieged to surrender; his

life shall be spared. But he answers only with musket-shots. A curious Cossack applies his eye to a little hole in the door, for the purpose of seeing the strange old man; at the same instant, a ball flies into his eye. No other means being left to make themselves master of the hero, the Russians begin to fire at the house. The Tshetshenz responds to their fire in the liveliest style; no ball appears to hit him, but, at his shot, blood always flows.

The thought occurs to an officer of burning the house down from above, and immediately from all sides firebrands are flying on the thick straw roof, which in a few minutes is in flames. With lightning-speed the fire spreads; the ceiling of the room is on the point of falling in; the Tshetshenz already bleeds from several wounds; but, far from giving in, fires his piece for the last time, takes the dagger in his left hand, the sabre in his right, drives out the door, and rushes, blindly cutting about him, into the midst of his foes, who, confounded by so super-human a courage, fall back as at a signal given. Already the unfortunate man, exhausted by loss

•

of blood, is sinking down, when a sturdy warrior of Tushina springs upon him with drawn sabre, and cleaves his head from top to bottom.

I pass over the description of the horrible barbarity with which the Russian soldiers abused the corpse of the hero.

When the hoary General von Neidhart heard how many Russians had fallen under the strokes of the old Tshetshenz, a cloud of sorrow overcast his brow, and he exclaimed, sadly,—“So many for one!”

Among the fallen were also three Cossacks belonging to the Commander's train. The fate of the families of the slain went to his heart. “Who will now provide for the poor women and children?” said he to one of his confidants. “Console yourself for that, General!” replied the latter; “among the Cossacks of the Caucasus the wife supports the husband, and not the husband the wife.”

CHAPTER VIII.

TRANSITIONS.—KESHISH-OGLU.—ALLAHWERDY.—

NATIONAL SONGS OF THE KURDS.

WITH our departure from the Circassian coast begins a transition chapter, wherein I have to make the difficult decision, either to enter on the journey home and sail away through the Thracian Bosphorus, the Sea of Marmora, and the Grecian Archipelago, as the actual course of things requires, or once again to return to Tiflis and the school of wisdom of Mirza Shaffy.

After mature consideration, I decide for the latter, and will here, in brief, explain my reasons for doing so.

The objection has been made to me from various quarters, that in the sketches of travel of the first part of the "Thousand and One Days," I studied too great a brevity, and rather sug-

gested than executed. In any case, the most agreeable objection I could hear; but, still, an objection deserving notice, and one to which I should attach yet greater weight had I not already written a special book of more scientific aim, on the People of the Caucasus, where copious information may be found on many points but slightly indicated in these volumes. To the several Cossack races of the Ukraine and the Steppe of the Don, I likewise devoted, five years ago, a special work, containing, besides historical and geographical notices, a considerable collection of national songs, chronologically arranged; so that on this point also, the reader who desires further knowledge needs not limit himself to the communications of the "Thousand and One Days."

Concerning the lands and peoples, on the other hand, among which I passed on my return, I have hitherto laid no account before the public; and here it might not altogether be advisable to crowd together the observations of half a year's sojourn in Kertsh, Theodosia, Jalta, among the Tartars of the Crimea, in Odessa, Constantinople,

Asia Minor, &c., in the cursory sketches of one or two chapters. The description of my homeward journey, therefore, is reserved for a special book of more political complexion; whilst the promised continuation of the "Songs and Sayings of Wisdom of Mirza Shaffy," together with some other poetical fragments of the Orient, shall follow here.

I fancy, by so doing, I shall meet the wishes of most of my readers; for Mirza Shaffy has found friends and favourers far out beyond the limits of Germany; and in journals, as well as in private letters, the wish has repeatedly been expressed to me, that my promise of giving a continuation of the "Songs and Sayings of the Wise Man of Gjändsha," might speedily be fulfilled.

Another promise, made at the same time, of presenting in translation, the "Poems of the Blind Armenian Minstrel, Keshish-Oglu," together with a large collection of Kurdish national songs—unfortunately I can only partially fulfil, since, by the sudden death of my friend, Abovian, at Erivan, the fountain is dried up from which I looked for further communications.

I shall presently take the opportunity of recording some particulars of the life of this excellent man, who, under struggles and deprivations of all kinds, had made it his object to diffuse the German language and customs among his countrymen of Ararat; and who, for a series of years, was a friendly and most useful guide to every German traveller in Armenia. Here, first of all, by way of poetical transition to the re-opening of "Mirza Shaffy's Divan of Wisdom," a little selection of poems of Keshish-Oglu may follow, and after them some Kurdish national songs, the growth, in like manner, of the highlands of Ararat.

KESHISH-UGLU*,

(or, according to the pronunciation of the people, Keshish-Ogli), was born in the first half of the preceding century, at Shulavery, an Armenian village, lying about sixty versts from Tiflis.

He was the son of a poor priest, and received, as a child, a sort of instruction in the Armenian and Tartar languages, but had the misfortune,

* Keshish-Oglu signifies Priest's son.

when he was only twelve years old, to lose his sight by the small-pox—a loss which was only in some degree compensated by an inner light arising in him—the light of poesy. His talents as a bard developed themselves so early, that even in his twentieth year he had attained a certain celebrity in the land. About this time he left his native country, where, notwithstanding his poet-fame, his lot was very sorrowful, to seek his fortune abroad. *Sasz** in hand, he roved from city to city, from village to village; was destined to enjoy a brilliant reception at the court of Teheran; traversed, at a subsequent period, the whole of Asia Minor; and came to Constantinople, where he was appointed court-poet of the Sultan, and found in his old age a peaceful employment free from care.

The wanderings of Keshish-Oglu were glorified by a multitude of little triumphs; for, at the singing contests which he instituted wherever he went, he almost always came off victorious.

* An extremely simple stringed instrument, playing the same part among the Armenians and Tartars as the *Gusli* among the Slavonians.

It is the custom, even at this day, among the Persians, Armenians, Tartars, &c., for the bards of the country publicly to challenge one another to the contest, and, in the presence usually of a great number of people, to hold regular singing-tourneys. One of them sings a verse or two on the spur of the moment, and constrains the other to respond in the same metre. Among the Armenians the Bible, among the Tartars the Koran, commonly forms the source whence the material for the first attempt is drawn. No prescriptions, however, exist in this respect, and each may take his material whence he will, provided only the party assailed at once comply with the proposed subject; and not until he has done this successfully, is he free, on his part, to handle a new theme.

The contest often lasts in this way for hours together, and the auditors follow the singing with the liveliest interest, every failure on the one side or the other occasioning a clamorous interruption. But no sooner is one of the two singers regularly posed, and unable any longer to follow his opponent, than he is declared vanquished, and the

other, amid loud attestations of approval, is proclaimed victor.

The victor has the right of breaking in pieces the stringed instrument of the vanquished; an event, however, of exceedingly rare occurrence. For the most part, he magnanimously offers back to his opponent the conquered *sasz*, whereby the reputation of the latter is in some measure restored; for without this magnanimity on the part of the victor, the defeated singer would never dare to take stringed instrument in hand again.

The learned of the company employ themselves in writing the verses down, which are commonly sung very slowly and with frequent repetitions; yet it seldom happens, as far as my experience goes, that anything remarkable is to be found in these impromptu poems. As a little specimen of such improvisatorial arts, I here subjoin a fragment of a contest once maintained by Keshish-Oglu with another Armenian minstrel, by name Allahwerdy. For this fragment, as for all communications respecting Keshish-Oglu, I am indebted to my excellent friend Aberkhan of

Erivan, who, by his untimely death, was unfortunately prevented from supplying me with a continuation of his interesting accounts.

Fragment of a Singing-contest between Keshish-Oglu and Allahwerdy.

Allahwerdy, as the challenger, goes up to his opponent, strikes the sasz, and begins to sing:

“ Health and joy to thy heart, O Keshish-Oglu !
Soon will woe be thy part, O Keshish-Oglu !
Each word of my song pointed at thee shall strike
Like a death-bringing dart, O Keshish-Oglu ! ”

Keshish-Oglu responds:

“ I return thy salute, O Allahwerdy !
Soon thy boast I'll confute, O Allahwerdy !
For my song like a thunderbolt on thee shall fall,
And thy voice shall be mute, O Allahwerdy ! ”

Again Allahwerdy sweeps the sasz, and sings:

“ From the hero malicious offences rebound,
In his ready defence he takes his ground ;
By thine ear will I lead thee the threshing flour* round,
And a dumb beast I'll make thee, O Keshish-Oglu ! ”

* In explanation of this passage it must be remarked that in Armenia, oxen are used for threshing the corn.

Keshish-Oglu rejoins:

“ Dwells the valorous mood in the hero's breast,
But the insolent mood is the coward's test;
Never rests my speech till thy tongue shall rest,
And thy wife be a widow, O Allahwerdy ! ”

In this manner the contest goes on, until one of the singers is exhausted. By way of variety, riddles are also proposed, proverbs rendered into verse, songs rehearsed in praise of wine and love, &c.

Most of the Tartar and Armenian songs which have come into my hands, bear unmistakable traces of the great influence which the Persian poetry, and especially Hafiz, have here exerted, perhaps without its being suspected by the modern bards of Armenia. The songs of Hafiz have taken such deep root among the Persian people, and have called forth such an infinity of imitations, in general, for ploughing, &c. The process of threshing is similar to that already described in the first part of this work: a great square board is drawn over the outspread corn, and the oxen are pulled by their ears to urge them on. Allahwerdy could not express his contempt for Keshish-Oglu more strongly than by this figure.

that most of the figures and applications of sensible nature therein occurring, have long since become part of the people's language. Now, the dominion of the Persians over Armenia having lasted for so long a time, the oppressed could not fail to receive in a great measure the stamp of their oppressors; and hence, in almost all Tartar and Armenian songs, we find Hafizian images and expressions, although the actual poems of Hafiz have never been studied by the Christian population of Armenia.

The hair of the loved one is an ensnaring net for the hearts of men; her eyebrows are bows wherewith to shoot at the enamoured victim; her lap is a flower-garden; her breasts are pomegranates; and, as the nightingale for the blossoming of the rose, so the singer pours forth his complaints for the blossoming of love in the breast of cruel beauties.

Of the songs of Keshish-Oglu, it has here been my concern to communicate only those wherein the peculiar characteristics of the poet are most strikingly manifest. Unfortunately

may give occasion to subsequent travellers of making further researches in Armenia, where, in parts which I did not visit, hundreds of the blind bard's songs are said to be still living in the mouth of the people.

1.

If glad and willing faithfulness
In lovely woman shine,
I need no other charming grace,
Be such a woman mine !

The fair and golden Anahid *,
Who aye herself doth only heed,
I leave her for a dearer meed,
A faithful wife be mine !

An eye that sparkles like a star,
A bosom sweet as melons are,
A forehead clear as heaven afar :
Be such a woman mine !

Who grief and joy with me will share,
Like Lokman^s every ill repair,
And smile away beclouding care:
Be such a woman mine !

* Anahid is the Armenian Venus. Some learned Armenians, such as Cirbied and Martin, would connect this name with the Grecian Diana, Anaïd read backwards being Diana.

The mouth's spring-breath away doth glide,
The bosom's flower-bed sheds its pride,
The faithful eye and heart abide :
A faithful wife be mine !

Keshish-Oglu the singer speaks :
Why love a woman's blooming cheeks ?
The blinded bard no beauty seeks :
A faithful wife be mine !

2.

Sweet maid ! what shall I render thee
For all thy love has given me ?
I've nothing equal to thy worth,
Thou lovely wonder of the earth !
But all I have to thee belongs,
The poor blind singer's sweetest songs !

3.

The maiden whom I love is fair,
Who doth with me in true love share,
No damsel may with her compare
On the mountain-heights of Ararat !

May God the blessing recompense
That she to be my love consents !
Her eye is black as are the tents
On the mountain-heights of Ararat !

Her step is like the bounding roe,
Through stilly wood-path, soft and low ;
Her breast like freshly-fallen snow
On the mountain-heights of Ararat !

Her bosom flush as orange is,
Her mouth a rosy bath of bliss,
As sweet as honey from the bees
On the mountain-heights of Ararat !

Her curling tresses scents exhale
As fresh as float o'er warm rose-vale
When plays the balmy vernal gale
On the mountain-heights of Ararat !

O give no other love thy hand,
Keshish-Oglu, by her love stand !
She makes an Eden of the land
On the mountain-heights of Ararat !

4.

A Dove I am seeking that from me has flown ;
Than mine never heart beat warmer nor fonder !
I tell you a sign whereby she may be known ;
O, help me to seek her where she doth wander !

Her form is slender, and black her locks,
Her eyes and her arching eyebrows black ;
The fairest of women, my charmer I lack,
O, help me to seek her where she doth wander !

I have left behind me house and land,
In foreign realms forlorn to stray ;
Through cities, through deserts has lain my way,
To seek the fair maiden where she doth wander !

I roam all around, and find her not ;
The poor blind man she scorns and flies ;
To follow her flight in vain he tries—
O, help me to seek her where she doth wander !

Sweet charmer return ! I'll bear from thee all !
I'll gladly be scorned and derided by thee ;
Thou, maiden, the star in my night shalt be—
O, tell me, tell me, where thou dost wander !

Arise, arise, O Keshish-Oglu !
Once more take the pilgrim's staff in hand,
And roam all around, through Iran's land,
Singing :—tell me, maiden, where thou dost wander !

SONGS OF KURDISTAN.

1.

LOVE SONG.

O look at me lovingly, dark-eyed maiden !
Thine eyelashes droop, with beauty laden :

Thine eyes are black as the berries of the vine,
They blacken this darkling life of mine :
Shine, beautiful maiden, through the gloom !
Come and be our guest, love, come to our home !
With the banqueting guests to the revel come !
More than all the rest thou shalt honoured be,
The first young ram shall be slain for thee * !

2.

LOVE SONG.

Like alef † shows thy slender form,
Of freckles ‡ black thy blossom warm
Doth full three hundred treasure !

* A mark of especial distinction among the mountain-tribes, as well of Ararat as Caucasus.

† Alef, the first letter of the Arabian alphabet, is frequently made use of by the poets of the East to mark the slender figure of a maiden.

‡ Black freckles are considered a capital ornament of women in the East. Those who are not provided by nature with this embellishment endeavour to produce such beauty-spots by artificial means, viz. by pricking forehead, cheek, chin, neck, and breast with needles, and then letting in small drops of a dark-blue tincture.

Thy breast shall be my holy shrine,
Shall church and cloister both combine,
And prayer* consort with pleasure !
Let Erzerum to ruin wane,
May I to thy sweet mouth attain,
And bliss in overmeasure !

3.

SPRING SONG.

O, fairest of all the land's delights,
High over the valleys and midway seen,
Are the verdant spots on the mountain-heights,
Are the nomade meadows of fragrant green !

Where the snow the mountains does not gird,
Where the black tents stand of the sun-browned Kurd,
Where the herdsman tends his fleshy herd,
Merry youths, pretty maidens dance between.

O, fairest of all the land's delights,
High over the valleys and midway seen,
Are the verdant spots on the mountain-heights,
Are the nomade meadows of fragrant green !

* The Kurds, as is well known, belong for the most part to the Jezids, or Devil-worshippers, and do not pray to God at all, on the principle that the Good Spirit will never do them any harm.

4.

MOURNING SONG.

Before me lies the warrior's grave ;

In the splendour of youth he yesterday shone ;

His lance was shivered, his life he gave—

Encountered, he fell amid foes assailing :

Now over his flesh and whitening bone

Already the worm and the snake are trailing.

5.

WAR SONG.

On his black horse leaped the warrior strong,

Around him gathered his vassal throng,

To the tents he rode of the hostile clan,

And smote off the head of Samam Chan.

6.

PLAINTIVE SONG.

I walked abroad, and over the plain

Saw wander beautiful maidens twain ;

My heart with passion was swelling :

From one to the other I passed in vain,

Nor one nor the other could I obtain ;

Black blood in my breast was welling.

* * * *

No love of mine nor word prevailed
To win a young maid's heart,
O'er two Kurds' heads my sword prevailed,
And achieved a strong blade's part.

The grass was wet with early dew
When they were slaughtered twain,
The green meadow-grass was dyed anew
By the bloody crimson stain.

* * * *

Two beautiful maidens' eyes prevailed
To carry my heart away;
Two beautiful maidens' eyes prevailed
My captive heart to slay.

* * * *

I am old become, and weak, and lame;
To threescore years and ten have reached;
With weakness is broken my wasting frame,
With age and sorrow my hair is bleached.

With sorrow my cheeks are blanched and worn,
And rest and slumber are from me torn—
Mine eyes, a flimmering red comes o'er them,
And pale death flimmers and flutters before them!

7.

MOURNING SONG.

Spring descending on the land alighted,
Life awaking through the earth and sky,
Field and grove with living green he dighted,
But the widow's son he called to die.

Fills a wild lament the mountain air,
Mourns the mother for her cherished son,
Ah! he was so fair, so young and fair!
And the grave now hides him cold and lone.

Shone afar his dress of crimson die,
When he, brandishing his lance on high,
To the stirrup on his charger sprang,
And his buckler like a pinion swang.

Comes the charger saddled, fleet as wind,
Neighs aloud his missing lord to find,
With his fretted hoof he scrapes the sward,
But he never finds his missing lord.

Far resound the mourning women's cries,
To the warrior ranks he never hies!

Worms already are his flesh consuming;
Cold the earth, and cold the stone that lies
O'er the face so late with beauty blooming.

CHAPTER IX.

ABOVIAN.

AFTER my return from Armenia, I had repeatedly written to Abovian to remind him of his promise of sending me a continuation of the Kurdish songs, and of the Tartar poems of Keshish-Oglu. He knew that it was my intention to prepare a German translation of them, and apply the pecuniary profits thence arising to the amelioration of his distressed condition. It was, therefore, inexplicable to me that all my letters remained unanswered, until, a short time since, I learned accidentally the melancholy cause. An old acquaintance of mine, and my instructor in the language of Little Russia, State-counsellor Roscovshenko of Tiflis, who visited me this summer, on a tour of health, at Berlin, told me that Abovian had disappeared

two years ago, and that, notwithstanding all inquiries, not a trace of him had been discovered. Roscoyshenko, the previous instructor of Abovian, had found occasion of inviting him to Tiflis for the purpose of procuring him a better situation. Turkistanov, a Georgian assistant-teacher in the Gymnasium at Tiflis, was sent to Erivan, to represent Abovian for a while. Arrived at Erivan, he learned that Abovian, contrary to his usual custom, left his house early in the morning, and has not yet returned. Turkistanov repeats his visit on the following day, and finds Abovian's wife dissolved in tears; she has been seeking about for her husband the whole night; no one knows anything of him, no one will say he has seen him. From that day to this, nothing has ever been heard of him again.

Probably he has fallen by his own hand; for, even at the time when I became acquainted with him, he was in a very sad and desponding state of mind; and this was still more increased by the melancholy circumstances of his connection with Professor Abich of Dorpat, whom he accompanied as guide in his ascent of Ararat.

The imperious demeanour to which Abich considered himself entitled, because, in the Russian scale of rank, he stood a degree or two higher than Abovian, gave occasion to disagreements which, in their consequences, brought the poor Armenian to the verge of despair. Abovian subsequently sent me his journals of that time, with the request that I would publish them under the title: "Supplemental and Explanatory Notes on the Ascent of Ararat by Professor Abich."

With the best of intentions, I did not fulfil this request; inasmuch as, in my opinion, the personal affairs which form the principal contents of those journals, do not properly belong to the forum of publicity; and further because by their publication I should only have injured both. So, then, these journals remain to this hour in my hands, no safe opportunity having presented itself of sending them back to Erivan.

In his last letter, Abovian wrote to me that he had resolved to leave the Russian service, and withdraw himself into the interior of Armenia, there to live by agriculture, after the manner of his ancestors; his limited income not being suf-

ficient for the requirements of the town, and a longer waiting for any improvement in his condition being only likely to plunge him still deeper into misery.

Bitter were the experiences which had brought the gifted and assiduous man to this resolution. The story of his life is too remarkable for me to avoid communicating some passages of it here.

Abovian was born of poor parents, at the beginning of the present century, in a village near Erivan, whose name I have forgotten. Evincing from his childhood a great desire of learning, he was placed at a very early age in the monastery of Etshmiadsin, to be educated as an ecclesiastic. In this old-famed patriarchal seat at the foot of Ararat, there ruled at that time the Catholicos Jephrem (*i.e.* Ephraim), a cold, imperious man, who, as regards forms and externalities, maintained a rigorous discipline among the monks and pupils of the monastery, but was heartily averse to all real culture and enlightenment. With his own acquirements he was always very secret; and of his bishops and

... these were esteemed the most learned

who had attained a scanty acquaintance with the Old-Armenian translation of the Bible.

The monastery had not then assumed the mask of European culture which it has worn ever since the visit of certain members of the imperial family. Abovian told me and R., when he accompanied us to Etshmiadsin, what an icy chill always ran over him when he entered the ancient walls; so terrible were the impressions he there received in his early youth, and which would never be effaced from his memory. Several attempts at flight, in which he had been surprised, occasioned his experiencing a still more rigorous treatment than before.

Thus he grew up amid weeping, praying, and fasting; in a society, rude, blunted for all noble purposes, and wasted by unnatural lusts; without deriving any other gain from it than a scanty knowledge of the Old-Armenian language. He had risen to the grade of deacon, when the famous Dorpat Professor, Parrot, in the year 1829, came to Armenia to attempt the ascent of Ararat. Chance brought him and Abovian to-

gether; and Abovian made so favourable an impression on Parrot, that the latter had no fear of the difficulty of persuading him to be the companion of his enterprise, when the other difficulties, which the high spirituality hold it their duty to put in the way of every attempt to ascend Ararat, had been happily surmounted.

The first attempt, which was undertaken without Abovian, failed. That Parrot, in the second ascent, attained a height of 15,138 feet above the level of the sea, and, at last, in his third attempt (26—28th September), actually reached the summit of Ararat, where, since the deluge, no foot of man had trod, he was mainly indebted to the exertions and circumspection of Abovian.

The learned German conceived a lively affection for the young Armenian, and on his return into his native land took him with him to Dorpat, where he supplied the place of father to him, and let him study six whole years at his expense.

These six years formed the happy period in Abovian's life. He saw a new world arise

before him, and embraced it all with so ardent a zeal and so fresh a susceptibility, that he soon felt quite at home in his German environment. The considerable philological learning he here acquired bore just as favourable testimony to his intellectual capacities, as the great attachment and thankfulness he showed towards his instructors did honour to his heart. His gratitude extended itself to everything that bore a German name; and, as, on his return to his native land, he let no opportunity slip of being serviceable to the German travellers who visited the Caucasus and Armenia, so he looked upon it as the object of his life to spread the German language and civilization among the Georgians and Armenians. More than a hundred young Asiatics, at the time when I became acquainted with him (1844), were already so far advanced under his instructions, that they could express themselves by word and pen with fluency in the German language. After his return from Dorpat, he resided for a series of years at Tiflis, where he occupied himself exclusively with the education of his young country people, but, too

disinterested, and too little of a practical nature, to apply the ancient principle "the labourer is worthy of his hire," in necessary extension to himself, he soon fell into pecuniary difficulties, which became to him the sources of endless calamity. Mirza-Shaffy once said concerning him, "Abovian avalindzhe Armeninder, kje Armenin jochter:"—a proposition bearing the two-fold signification: "Abovian is the first Armenian who is not an Armenian (*i.e.* not a covetous and corruptible man);" and, "Abovian is the first Armenian because he is not an Armenian (in the bad sense of the word)." Through the intercession of his Dorpat friends, Abovian, who in the meanwhile had married a German wife, received the situation of inspector of the district-school at Erivan, but with so small a salary that it could only serve to prolong his life in sorrow.

I have already frequently had occasion to remark, that a salary in Russia always takes into account a large conscience on the part of the functionary. Men who have such a state-conscience invariably lead an agreeable life, and often lay out more on attendants and domestics than

the whole salary amounts to ; whilst others, who, through fear or sense of honour, know not how to adapt themselves to circumstances, never prosper.

To this class belonged Abovian; he was too honourable to strike into the ordinary Russian path of enrichment; and all endeavours to convert his many literary labours into money failed. Having, for example, with great industry and cost of time, completed a grammar and dictionary of the New-Armenian language, as now spoken by the people, he transmitted it to Petersburg, with the hope that the Academy of Sciences would undertake the publication of the work, and encourage him, by a moderate support, to further labours.

His expectation was disappointed: the Academy referred the work to one of its members considered competent to the subject, viz. to Herr Brosset, the younger; and Herr Brosset, in a lengthy judgment, explained, that the work possessed, indeed, a copious material, but was altogether wanting in scientific groundwork and arrangement.

However comical such a judgment may sound, coming just from the mouth of M. Brosset, whose *Georgian Grammar* exhibits neither a copious material nor a trace of scientific groundwork and arrangement, it had, nevertheless, the most melancholy consequences for Abovian. All the hopes he had connected with a work, completed after long years of toil and care, were annihilated by one stroke of the pen; and, at the same time, the possibility was taken from him of completing the rest of his labours. Subsequent influential intercessions on the part of competent persons remained, for political reasons, ineffectual.

It was, namely, the design of Abovian,—and all his labours tended to this end—to lay the foundation of a New-Armenian literature, and thus to form a national basis for the development of the minds of his countrymen. I have already remarked, that the Old-Armenian has long been a dead or learned language, whose rich literary treasures are accessible only to a select few in the land itself. Abovian proposed to transfer the most valuable of these treasures, with the pre-

servation of the old characters, into the New-Armenian language, as the readiest and surest means of spreading refinement among his countrymen, and awakening in them intellectual tastes. Formerly, even the more enlightened of the people were obliged to read the Bible in a Turkish translation, travestied with Armenian characters, until, by Dietrich's attempt at a New-Armenian translation of the Bible, the evil was obviated.

With the help of his able scholars, by translations from the Old-Armenian and European languages, Abovian would have been able, within a few years, to call to life a literature sufficing for the present requirements of the people, had not his plans been designedly frustrated from Petersburg.

The Russian Government aspires to the reputation of a patroness of the arts and sciences; she readily lavishes the largest sums on the most insignificant men, if these are only provided with good *recommendations*; she looks on with favour, and rewards with rank and order, when a Kalmük or a Kirghiz grammar is composed at

Petersburgh for the French ; she has nothing to say against it when the graves of the old Pontic kings are dug up, and the unearthed statues placed in museums ; she has just as little to say against it when her archæologists strike off heads and legs from these statues (as has actually happened), in order to pack them more conveniently in chests for conveyance to Petersburgh.

But every national development that deviates from the Russian catechism, is a thorn in her eye. “ If the Armenians will be civilized, let them learn Russian ; and if they will pray, let them pray in Russian,” said General S——, one of the co-directors of Moscovitish popular enlightenment.

It will, accordingly, be found comprehensible that Abovian, notwithstanding all his perseverance and ability, could not succeed with his endeavours in Russia.

* * * * *

The few lines I wished to devote to the memory of my Armenian friend have grown, unawares, to a whole chapter. I am not afraid of

having excited thereby the displeasure of the German reader.

Abovian, who contributed so much to bring the German name into honour and esteem in the distant East, deserved to have his own name recorded with honour and esteem in Germany.

CHAPTER X.

RETURN TO THE SCHOOL OF WISDOM. THE
SONGS OF MIRZA-SHAFFY.

Rise thou up again in my remembrance, Mirza-Shaffy, Wise Man of Gjändsha! Thy words are become truth, and what thou didst promise us is fulfilled. Thy songs have found a sweet dwelling-place in the hearts of our women and maidens, and thy name has gained a sound of honour in the Evening-land.

Once again will we sit down and drink with thee, and sing, and listen to thy sayings in the Divan of Wisdom.

See, the flowers wherewith thou didst present me I have wreathed in garlands, and the pearls that thou didst scatter before me I have strung together, to thee for a fame, and to man for a joy.

* * * * *

The attentive reader of the first part of the "Thousand and One Days" will remember that, on my return from Armenia, Mirza-Shaffy presented me with a collection of his songs, as a memorial of the hours we had spent at Tiflis, in singing odes of love, and in drinking the wine of Kachetos.

He entitled these songs "The Book of Wisdom and the Fountain of Knowledge;" and wrote a preface to them to vindicate himself, as it were, in his own estimation, for having put upon paper verses composed for the most part in playful moods; for at the bottom, notwithstanding the self-praise everywhere resounding through them, he set little store by these productions. If ever there was a man who valued deeds more highly than words, that man was Mirza-Shaffy.

Many of the songs of the Wise Man of Gjändsha, which he had sung at singing-fêtes, or on other festal occasions, live in the mouths of the Georgians and Tartars, without its ever having occurred to him to retain them by the written word. Frequently it would not be known at all

that they were his, were it not for the Oriental custom of incorporating the poet's name with every ghazel. This, as is known, commonly happens with the utmost *naïveté*; the poet either beginning or ending with an overflow of self-praise. As, for example, with Hafiz:

“ He who in song and melody
Will rival Hafiz' might,
Shall like the little swallow be
That tempts the eagle's flight ! ”

Or with Mirza-Shaffy:

“ Mirza-Shaffy ! how lovelily
Thy words of wisdom throng !
Thy lay is musical discourse,
And thy discourse a song ! ”

• • • • •

* * * * *

Those of the poems of Mirza-Shaffy which allowed of being translated without essential injury to the form and spirit of the original, I bring before the reader here in a western dress.

And as they for the most part originated beneath my eyes, and the story of their origin is oftentimes as interesting as the songs themselves, I interweave whatever noteworthy circumstance connected with them occurs to my memory.

The Preface to the Book of Wisdom runs in translation as follows :

“ In the name of Allah the Merciful,

The Plenteous in Compassion !

“ Having rendered praise and glory to the Creator of Heaven and Earth, let us begin to declare the peculiar nature and quality of this Book.

“ At the repeated request and desire of his friend and disciple Bunsten-Effendi * (may God increase the number of his days !), Mirza-Shaffy (whose lot may Allah meliorate !) has written a collection of his Kassides, Ghazels, Mokataat †, Mesneviat ‡, and Rubajat §, in this Book, as a

* This was the name given to me by the learned men of the Caucasus, the proper pronunciation of the word Bodenstein being a matter of too great difficulty for them.

† Fragments of ghazels wherein the end-rhyme is wanting.

‡ Poems in which each verse rhymes upon the other.

§ Four-lined poems with three rhymes.

Fountain of Knowledge, whence fools may draw,
and where the Wise may find refreshment.

“There are contained in this collection songs of joy, of love, and of wine; songs of consolation and encouragement; songs in praise of all that is beautiful and good, and songs for a scourge of all that is bad and common; seeds of wisdom prepared to be scattered abroad on the field of curiosity, and into the furrows of sensibility; songs composed as rules for eloquence and poetry, so that those who follow them shall keep the right medium, and not suffer the steed of discourse to run in the path of prolixity, as Nechshebi has already uttered:

‘Aye, Nechshebi! the mean of safety choose;
Neither too much, nor yet too little say;
Pursue thine aim, and undiverted use
The moderation of the middle way!’

“Furthermore, these songs are to serve as a rule for distinguishing the works of bad poets and pretenders (defilement on their heads!) from the works of such poets as draw from their own breast, and always travel on the path of uprightness: whereof there are infallible signs. A bad

poet may be compared to a swamp, to the bottom of which no one can see, not because it is deep, but because it is muddy, and nobody can draw therefrom to refresh himself, or to wash himself clean from his folly.

“But of the good poet holds true that which is written :

‘ The joy of the world he enhances,
And scatters his golden opinions,
As prince on the throne of the fancies,
And ruler of Beauty’s dominions! ’”

Say, why renowned in every land
Are Shiraz’ roses, loves, and wine ?
Renowned the flowing Roknabad,
The bowers that round Mosella twine ?

Not their own beauty gave them fame,
More beauteous earth can show than they—
They’re famed, Hafiz ! through thee alone,
Through those enchanting lays of thine !

The Bonzedom thou hast overthrown,
The fame of Shiraz thou hast reared—
Around thee lowly graces rise,
And lofty grandeurs low decline !

Thy glory o'er the city floats,
Embellishing the stream and bower—
Each stone that builds her palaces
Doth like a precious jewel shine !

In beauty Tiflis too abounds,
Has roses, wine, and maidens fair—
And fate in thee, Mirza-Shaffy,
A singer, too, doth here assign !

Like Shiraz, by Hafiz renowned,
Shall Tiflis through thy lay become—
All rich appliances for thee
In glorious harmony combine !

The stream-resounding garden-town,
Her girdling mountains high as heaven,
Her blooming joys, her living loves,
Mirza-Shaffy, all these are thine !

Her beauteous maidens (mark ye that!)
To me for ever now belong!
Love-glancing eyes, and rosy mouths,
And cheeks, and hands, and hearts are mine!

A Paradise my song shall be
For wine and beauty, love and flowers—
Who enters in is purified
From mortal sin by grace divine!

For bonzes it shall be a hell,
For kiss-and-wine-despisers all—
Each verse shall this befooled herd
To realms of endless woe consign!

Through all the zones of earth thy lay,
Mirza-Shaffy, shall now resound—
Thy words, O poet! are become
Of love and song the glowing shrine!

* * * *

Thou sentest thy disciples forth,
And lo! thy promise stands fulfilled:
Renowned is Tiflis through thy lay,
From yellow Kur to rolling Rhine!

* * * *

O'er Evening-land the glory flies,
And fairest bosoms own the charm,
In merry homes along the banks
Of silver Thames and northern Tyne !

Come hither, youth ! thee wisdom I will teach,
Of life shalt thou the worth and joy be learning—
Pure faith and highest knowledge thou shalt reach,
And real truth without alloy be learning !

Come, learn the rocks of foolishness to shun,
And follow on the way my song is showing—
With rich delight thy heart shall overrun,
And sweet persuasion from thy lip be flowing !

Forth from the olden law of dusky rooms,
Thy foot shall to a fairer aim be tending—
With love and wine, embowered in rosy blooms,
Shalt thou the golden hours of life be spending !

And what thou doest by my song's command,
Thou shalt with open, cheerful mood be doing—
From false hypocrisy shalt loose thy hand,

No sword have I to change the mind of fools,
On others no constraint will I be bringing—
My yoke is light—the pith of wisdom's rules
Resolves itself to love, and wine, and singing!

Immense is Beauty's magic circle drawn,
Alluring on in ardent throng unending
The hearts of men—and with the growing charm
Shall aye the magic tones of song be blending!

Hear the people's voice declare ;
He who loveth truth must have
Horse already rein in hand—
He who thinketh truth must have
Foot in stirrup firmly stand—
He who speaketh truth must have
Wings of light and speed expand !
Sings, in fine, Mirza-Shaffy :
Him who lieth shame shall brand !

In the path of the true there may danger abound,
But, O poet! 'be thou in that path ever found—
O'er the bogs of deceit never glare to decoy,
For all beauty is truth, and true beauty thy joy !

But lest wisdom gain harm, or the truth give offence,
In a flowery speech thou shalt mantle the sense—
As the cluster hangs laden with juice on the vine,
But hid in the green leaves that round it entwine.

When entranced in the circle of merry delight,
Whether early or late be the hour of the night,
One careless can sit—
When the goblet o'erflows with its wine flashing bright,
And the lip with its wit—
And a rosy-checked beauty, with jewels bedight,
Sheds around her a golden and magical light :
There thou gladly dost linger, O Mirza-Shaffy !
Where the wine and the wisdom are mellow and free.

The man in wisdom strong
The mean of right will hold :
Will not be grave when young,
Will not be gay when old !

The winter wears no bloom,
The summer wears no snow—
Youth's roses and perfume
Suit not the hoary brow !

That youth should cold abstain,
That age should riot wild,
Will never be the strain
Of Wisdom's truthful child!

O blessed he, for whom above,
In book of fate, 'tis given aye
To spend his days in song and love,
With soul serene and even aye!

The wrath of bonzes rules him not,
The scented mosque befools him not—
His heart with wine he cheers benign,
And love his life doth leaven aye!

Such lot, Mirza-Shaffy, is thine!
Enjoy it wholly—ne'er repine—
Thyself bethink, as thou dost drink,
The days o' the week are seven aye!

Its course is by the first begun,
And only with the last is run—
Yet fools do miss the daily bliss,
And pine for yonder heaven aye!

A joyous song, an easy mind,
Is all that God to thee assigned—
Then leave dull care, and follow where
Love makes of earth a heaven aye !

The rose complained with lamentation,
How soon her scent would pass away,
The gift of balmy breezes vernal :

I told her for her consolation,
That it should mingle with my lay,
And there enjoy a life eternal !

Tell me how I may know the fairest flowers ?
By the blossoms they bear !

Tell me how I may know the choicest wines ?
By the quality rare !

Tell me how I may know the Shah and Mufti ?
By the capuches they wear !

Then tell me which are the worthiest men ?
Their deeds will declare !

The answer, O, friend, is right—of hollow pretences
See thou beware !

Embitter not young life's aspiring strain,
What God has given thee do not thou disdain !

Close not thy heart to love, nor let thy lips
Refuse the mellow wine's empurpling stain !

A fairer double bliss than love and wine
Not earth affords in all her rich domain !

Then honour these as thy terrestrial gods,
And rear to none beside so sweet a fane !

The fools who pine for yonder world's delights
Possess the joy of this fair world in vain !

The Mufti threatens with hell and devil grim,
The wise man hears it all and laughs amain !

The Mufti thinks his knowledge high and vast,
Mirza-Shaffy would have him think again !

From loving those who love me,
And from hating those who hate,
None ever had power to move me,
This passion shall never abate.

The man of even mood,
Whose spirit is firm and tender,
Will always good for good,
And evil for evil render !

To the good and brave one yields,
The cheek of beauty one kisses,
One fosters the seed in the fields,
And crushes the snake as it hisses.

To wrongs in person or fame,
The strong are not made for submitting—
Forgiveness is woman's name,
But to man revenge is befitting !

The nightingale her little head
Hung drooping down, and mournful said,
Alas ! of what avail to me,
With so melodious a lay,
And wonder-flood of harmony,
To fill the rapture-ringing air—
So long as I this plumage gray,
And not the rose's beauty wear !

The rose laid down her lovely head
Upon her leaves, and mournful said :
Alas ! of what avail to me,

That I surpass all other flowers,
In colour, bloom, and fragrancy,
In charming grace and beauty rare—
So long as in the tuneful powers
Of nightingale I do not share !

Mirza-Shaffy restored the peace.
He spake : Let both your sorrows cease ;
Sweet flower of grace and fragrancy,
Thou rose with odour-dropping vest ;
Sweet bird of song and melody,
Thou nightingale with tuneful breast ;
Come blend ye twain in one delight,
Your charms in my sweet song unite !

In winter I sing and drink amain,
For joy that Spring is drawing near—
And when Spring doth come, I drink again,
For joy that she at length is here.

My heart draws its bliss from thine, and aloft in
Joyous elation springs,
And thither returns where for it of love the
Sweet inspiration springs ;
Like the fountain that heavenward in a spray of
Mad jubilation springs,
And yet ever returns to the nourishing source whence its
Fresh renovation springs.

She met me in the street, and 'gan
To ask me, " Canst thou write ? "—" O yes !"
" Then write for me a talisman !"—
" Will that give thee delight ?"—" O yes !"

Forthwith I seized the kalem-dan,
" Come enter we the house," she said,
" There thou shalt write the talisman ;"—
" With thee there while I write ?"—" O yes !"

She entered in—I followed on—
Mirza-Shaffy, it lasted long !
But didst thou write the talisman ?
And was it a delight ?—O yes !

SAYINGS OF WISDOM.

The end of anger is the beginning of repentance.

He who lays his all at stake
Must be either fool or rake.

A gray eye
Is wise and sly ;
A brown eye bespeaks
Roguish freaks ;
Eyes of blue
Are faithful and true ;
But a black eye's meaning who shall mark ?
Like the way of God 't is hidden and dark !

O ! life has its trouble,
And life has its joy—
To some 't is a bubble,
To some 't is a toy—
And all things are double,
Each has its alloy.

But love has no trouble,
For love is all joy—
True love is no bubble,
True love is no toy—
When true love is double
It has no alloy !

Singers there are who are always sighing,
Wearing a guise of unreal sorrow,
Whining as if with grief they were dying,
In whom false feelings ever flow,
Because true feeling they never know,
And therefore in other hearts of men,
Although from these their grief they borrow,
True feelings they never awaken again.

Beware, O bard, of such treason to truth,
Offensive alike to reason and ruth,
With original light,
Like the sun in his might,
Ever fresh, ever young,
Thyself be revealing,
In the splendour of song,
In the ardour of feeling.

I hate the ridiculous jingle of rhyme,
That has only the merit of jingling well,
While the theme has been worn out time by time,
Like the dirge everlasting of heaven and hell,
Or the ceaseless chime
Of fountain and mountain,
Of pleasure and treasure,
Of thunder and wonder,
Of love and dove,
And whatever more,
In copious store,
So readily slips from the pen,
All common and trite,
To fools a delight,
But a torment to rational men.

Wouldst thou see the spirit that breathes in a lay,
And gladden thyself in its fragrant mirth,
By the empty sound be not led astray,
Nor seek in air the gold of earth.

Shun the barren verse so smooth and soft,
On whose jingling lines hollow sounds are strung ;
Remember the clumsiest blockhead oft
The most melodious rhyme has sung.

When the poet begins to conceive the immense,
His song-book instantly close—
What is incomprehensible by common sense
From unintelligence flows.

When the song, like a mosque, is full of illusion
And dismal folly,
The head of the poet is full of confusion
And dark melancholy.

The poet who cannot create his song
From the soul within, or the world without him,
Belongs himself to the witless throng
Whom his witless effusions gather about him.

When figure and word too richly lace
The singer's enamoured strain,
They show that Beauty's simple grace
And spirit he cannot attain.

The prudent man never roves afar,
In search of what is in sight,
And his hand never grasps at a heavenly star
To kindle an earthly light.

It is easy to put on a cunning grimace,
And, assuming the air of the wise,
To say, with importance: this I embrace,
And that I despise—
And the fact that I do so sufficiently proves
The former is good, the latter is base,
Whoever denies—
For the things I assert are positive truths,
And those I repudiate lies :—
From all such pretenders, O friend ! it behoves
Thee to turn thine indignant eyes !

Of the things that are fit
For the baffling of the wit,
There is none can outvie
The rolling of the eye !

To believe that men are improved
By misfortune is all a dream—
As well believe the sword
By rust doth brighter gleam,
Defilement heighten purity,
Pollution clear the stream !

As the fruit only thrives in the field,
When nourished by sun and shower ;
So virtue man only can yield,
When happiness blesses his bower !

In life, surveyed as a whole,
The cases may not be few,
Where misfortune cleanses the soul,
As experience widens the view.
There are cases where the physician
The use of poison has proved,
And poison disease has removed—
Yet were it not rash to conclude,
From the grounds of a special condition,
That poison is wholesome food ?

He who is oldest in years
Not always plays the best part—
He who has shed the most tears
Not always bears the best heart !

Mirza-Shaffy ! thou wouldst be blind,
An old man in heart, and a child in mind,
Shouldst thou in deed, or in word and lay,
The faith and teaching of fools obey.

Once on a time a fool maintained
That man to trouble and grief was born ;
And ever since then has the saying remained,
Of all faithful fools the creed forlorn.

And since mainly fools the mass compose,
Enjoyment on earth has been forsworn ;
The people's vision shorter grows,
And the people's ears are longer drawn.

CHAPTER XI.

A NEW SIDE OF THE WISDOM OF MIRZA-JUSSUF,
AND HIS POLEMIC WITH MIRZA-SHAFFY.

THE attentive reader of the first part of the "Thousand and One Days" will doubtless remember Mirza-Jussuf, the Wise Man of Bagdad, to whom Mirza-Shaffy gave so striking a proof of his high superiority.

Mirza-Jussuf, notwithstanding his defeat in the contest of wisdom, had not abandoned the hope of gaining me for a pupil. Of course he did not venture to visit me again, for fear of being once more surprised by the Wise Man of Gjändsha; but he managed to find other means and ways to apprise me of his endeavours. An acquaintance of mine had for some time been studying Persian with him, and had actually

made considerable progress in this language; for the Wise Man of Bagdad could certainly compare in Persian and Arabic with any of the learned of the land. In general, he was deficient neither in learning nor in understanding; he was only wanting in character and reliability; he was, as we should express it, in the dialect of the West, a learned loon; one of those men who come in again at the back door, when they have been kicked out at the front. Scarcely a week passed without his giving me, through his pupil, proofs of his obtrusiveness. Now he caused some flattering message to be delivered to me; now he sent me a poem, wherein I was extolled as a paragon of wisdom; now a pictorial representation, wherein I figured as Rustam riding on an elephant.

On these pictures, which he manufactured himself, without any help of colour, pencil, or graver, — sketching, or, more correctly, carving the figures on the paper solely by means of his nails, and thus, in a very ingenious manner, producing a kind of relief—Mirza-Jussuf laid an uncommon stress; and

indeed his finger-facility in this respect was worthy of all praise.

I lavished, accordingly, great eulogiums on the pictures sent to me, of which I still possess some specimens in pretty good preservation; and sent him in return, as a substantial expression of my thanks, a handsome Persian mirror, the most acceptable present I could make to the vain man.

But now the arrogance of Mirza-Jussuf knew no bounds; he no longer questioned the propriety of having cut out for me the Wise Man of Gjändsha complete; but, whilst on the one hand, he poured upon me a profusion of phrases and poems, he went on the other so far as to ridicule Mirza-Shaffy in doggrel verses. At the same time he caused it to be disclosed to me through his pupil, that it was always his custom to execute the beautiful pictures during the hours of instruction, and that he did not at all object to carving three pictures in one evening, and singing three ghazels beside, without requiring for his instruction a denar more than Mirza-Shaffy.

The Wise Man of Gjändsha could not fail to

perceive that Mirza-Jussuf had again for some time past carried his head very high, and that in the bazaar and in the streets he passed him with as scornful a look as if he had completely forgotten the scene of the slipper. Still more did he wonder at being derided by his rival in dog-grel verses. But Mirza-Shaffy was not the man to be provoked by trifles; he sustained all the outbreaks of Jussufian arrogance with that serene superiority which so well became the Wise Man of Gjändsha. He satisfied himself with now and then admonishing his opponent by a verse or two, which commonly bore more traces of humour than of resentment; as for example:—

“ Cease, Mirza-Jussuf, that spleen of thine,
I'm too jovial now to heed thy whine—
Instead of scattering hate like thee,
I quaff my bumper of flowing wine!

Thy punishment sure is enough severe,
That nothing affords thee contentment here—
Where yet every heart that will may find
What love and joy and abounding cheer!”

Or:

“ With what a sprawling gait goes Mirza-Jussuf yonder ;
See how he knits his brow when he doth deeply ponder.
He scorneth all mankind, himself alone excepted,
Himself alone he praises wherever he doth wander.

Sure to the herd belongs this heavy clumsy fellow,
And hence the reason why he so dismally doth bellow—
But has he then a right the nightingale to slander,
Because of her light-plumage, and song so rich and
mellow ?”

In this manner there arose between the two wise men, what among us would be called a polemic, wherein, however, Mirza-Jussuf regularly had the worst of it, being always obliged to make up in bitterness what he wanted in wit. His bitterness transformed itself to perfect fury, when Mirza-Shaffy had one day sent the following poem to his house:—

“ In Mirza-Jussuf lo !

A critic stern and fearful !

The day delights him not

Because it is too cheerful.

Because they have their thorns,
He finds no charm in roses ;
And eke all men he scorns,
Because all men have noses !

He blames whatever not
According to his rule is—
Sees all things, this except,
That he a precious fool is !

And thus his life he passes,
With art and nature striving,
While him through mist and vapour
The day and night are driving.

Mirza-Shaffy laughs at him,
In merry roguish way,
And gathers from his bitterness
The sweetest little lay !”

My wise teacher sang these verses to me in the hours of instruction, ordered a fresh pipe to be brought him, sipped down a glass of wine, and then communicated to me his intention of giving Mirza-Jussuf, on the first favourable opportunity, a new substantial setting to rights; the

Wise Man of Bagdad having, in his impotent wrath, spread false reports of all kinds about us; as, for example, that I gave myself all possible trouble to gain him for my teacher, because Mirza-Shaffy was of no use whatever, and especially because I had a great fancy for the picture-carving, an art completely unknown to the Wise Man of Gjändsha. That I had, moreover, with this view, already employed various artifices to induce the Wise Man of Bagdad to visit me again; having presented him, among other things, with a splendid mirror, and promised him many other splendid things beside. "The simple truth of the story is," said I, in answer to Mirza-Shaffy, "that I certainly did send a mirror to the Wise Man of Bagdad; a little, prettily-ornamented Persian pocket-mirror; but this present was by no means intended as an enticement, of which, as thou thyself knowest, there is no need, neither for the Wise Man of Bagdad, nor for any other learned man of the land. I merely wished to make Mirza-Jussuf a present, in return for the many poems and pictures which he is never tired of sending to my

house, and among which are some that are really very pretty."

"Then they are not his own productions!" interjected Mirza-Shaffy.

"How canst thou maintain that so certainly? Art thou not somewhat unjust and partial in thy judgment of Mirza-Jussuf? How canst thou know that his songs are bad, without having read them?"

"What questions thou askest! How can I be unjust in my judgment, when I maintain that no roses grow on thistles, that no wine flows from marshes, and that no gold swims on water! If Mirza-Jussuf has given thee a beautiful song, it is certainly not his own production; or he has contributed nothing to it but the words; the images and thoughts are unquestionably stolen. His wisdom is not like a kernel, or seed of corn, planted in him to blossom and bear fruit; he has read much and learned much, but without becoming wiser thereby. His sayings of wisdom go no deeper than inscriptions cut on the rind of a tree. Show me what he has written to thee; I will tell thee at once the fountain whence it has flown."

I had, in fact, a better opinion of the talents of Mirza-Jussuf, and made use of the time of instruction to make my teacher acquainted with the poems which his rival had sent me.

First of all came some pious, purely sentimental poems, which, with their far-fetched images and superabundant style of expression, made the less impression on me, as I knew their contents stood in thorough contradiction with Mirza-Jussuf's character. The Wise Man of Gjändsha did not deem it at all worth while to submit these songs to a minute examination. As a conscientious teacher, however, he took occasion by them to instil into me some "Sayings of Wisdom," in order, as he remarked, to form my judgment, and teach me to distinguish the spurious from the genuine. I had already sufficiently accustomed myself to his peculiarities, to know exactly when I was to write down his words, without needing any direct hint from him. Whenever he was about to dictate anything for my pen, he first sipped down a glass of Kachetine, puffed out a potent whiff or two of fragrant tobacco-smoke from his tshibuq, and let his right leg hang negligently down from the

divan. The withdrawal of the leg was always a sure sign that the fountain of his wisdom was for the moment dried up. Mirza-Shaffy was not a man of many words. What he had to say was always expressed with brevity and point. His whole judgment on the pious effusions of the Wise Man of Bagdad restricted itself to the verse :

“ When the song, like a mosque, is full of illusion
And dismal folly,
The head of the poet is full of confusion
And dark melancholy.”

We turned over more leaves, and the next thing that attracted our attention was a love-song to the following effect:—

“ Thou knowest that thy glances kill,
Like winged arrows, swift and sure—
And mine thy face with blushes fill :
How shall we both now find a cure?
O ! me•thou evermore mayst kill,
My life, my love, what bliss betides it !
And blushes, aye, thy face may fill,
Let me but lift the veil that hides it !”

“Now how dost thou like this?” I submitted to the rigorous judgment of my teacher.

“Not bad,” rejoined he, “but what good there is in it belongs to Hafiz, and certainly looks much prettier in its original dress.” He let his leg hang down again, and sang:—

“O Hafiz! a wonderful entrancement
 Seizes him who hears thy magic lines—
 And their beauty with a new enhancement
 In his memory ever dwells and shines!”

After we had next examined some songs of praise intended for me, the substance of which Mirza-Shaffy ascribed to the poet Dzhamy, we again came to a love-song, which seemed to me to be marked by special beauty of language:—

“Upon her silken ottoman,
 Begirt with cushions soft she lies,
 The pearling tube of her kalljan
 She to her rosy lips applies.

And through the vapour's veil of blue,
 Suffused with dazzling radiancy,
 Breaks like a sun upon the view
 Her countenance of majesty.

My very being fades away
 With rapture as I draw before her,
 Transfigured with her shining ray,
 And bending lowly down adore her !"

"All stolen together!" said Mirza-Shaffy, smiling; "now a note of Saadi, and now of Chakany, now of Dzhamy, and now of Hafiz!"

The Wise Man of Gjändsha became meditative. He twitched his towery cap, blew the smoke of his tshibuq in long whiffs before him, and his leg gliding down from the divan bade me again take up the kalem-dan. He sang, and I wrote:—

"Yes, truly, Mirza-Jussuf is a very learned man,
 Hafiz he studies now, and now the Alkoran,
 Now Dzhamy and Chakany, and now the Gjülistan.
 He steals a flower from one, from another a figure rare,
 A thought of beauty here, and a word of beauty there.
 What has been formed already he seeks to form again;
 The world of song entire transplants into his strain;
 Adorns with borrowed plumes his native finery,
 And struts about therewith, and calls it poetry !

How differently conceives and lives Mirza-Shaffy !
His heart a beaming star—his breast a garden-bower,
Where grows the luscious fruit, and blooms the fragrant
flower.

And yet amid the blossom and expanse of new creation,
Forgets he not the tone and metric composition ;
But lightly he esteems the rhyming intonation,
As not the poet's chief, sublime, appropriate mission ;
Nor does the flowing line and flowery decoration,
Without the solid beauty content his high ambition ;
The spangled pomp of words yields him no compensation
For base and common thoughts, and thoughts of inanition !”

He paused a moment, moistened his lips once more, and then proceeded:—

“Better the jewel than the casket,
The metal than the mine,
The viand than the flasket,
The treasure than the shrine ;
The wine without the goblet,
Than the goblet without the wine ;
The honey without the cell,
Than the cell without the honey ;

The money without the purse,
Than the purse without the money ;
The seed without the shell,
• Than the shell without the seed ;
The deed without the word,
Than the word without the deed !”

CHAPTER XII.

HAFIZ.

THE following session in the Divan of Wisdom was devoted to an exposition from Mirza-Shaffy of one or two of the loveliest ghazels of Hafiz; which, as genuine diamonds in the crown of the king of Persian poets, may here find an appropriate place.

The translation is as faithful as possible. Those who are learned in the Persian language may judge whether I have succeeded in reproducing likewise the fragrancy and freshness of the original.

I.

Sweet maid of Shiraz, if thou wouldst
Be mine with heart and hand, love :
For the Indian mole on thy cheek I 'd give
Bochara and Samarcand, love !

Drink wine and in this world be glad,
For in Eden thou wilt ne'er find
The sunny stream of Roknabad,
Nor Mosella's rosy land, love !

As the Tartar rushes on his prey,
So Beauty on the senses ;
Resistless is her magic might,
Unbounded her command, love !

Yet Beauty nothing from us gains,
Nor by the jewel-splendour
And pencil-touch of art becomes
More beautiful and bland, love !

O talk to me of wine and song,
No more 'of yonder world tell—
It ever was, and aye will be,
An undiscovered land, love !

Alas ! how Jussuf's* blooming charm
Drew on Zuléikha's† passion
To tear the veil of her chastity,
I well can understand, love !

* Joseph.

† Potiphar's wife.

Thee, beauteous maiden, nought shall harm,
And were it mine to bind thee,
Around thy gentle form I would
Entwine a rosy band, love!

Thou chidest me : I blame thee not :
Yet oh ! do bitter words e'er
Become a ruby lip like thine,
By breath of sweetness fanned, love!

The pearls are strung : outshines the song
As the Pleiades in their beauty :
O ! may it win one smile of thine,
One clasp of thy fair hand, love!

2.

No fragrance has the rose without
The rosy lip's enravishment ;
And Spring without the bowl of wine,
No joy and blossom lavishment !

Whether in shady laurel-grove,
Or flowery arbour I recline,
Should nightingale not warble there,
Joy falters into languishment !

Whether the cypress bends above,
Or seas of blossom wave around,
My heart is ever longing for
A lovely maiden's blandishment !

And yet the presence of the fair,
The glowing cheek, the graceful arm,
Can yield no true delight without
The fond embrace's ravishment !

The rose is fair, and wine is sweet,
But only there where Selma is—
Where she is not, the spirit fails
As in the gloom of banishment !

Whate'er the hand of art has wrought :
Its fairest work can only be
Reflecting Selma's cheek be filled
With life and beauty's lavishment !

But O Hafiz ! this life of thine
Is all too valueless a coin,
To purchase from thy Selma's hand
Her rosy love's enravishment !

3.

Wilt thou on earth aye follow a life of
Manly doing and daring,
Thou must ever these golden sayings
Round thy heart be wearing.

Do not insult thy foe in misfortune—
Nor, when the smile of fortune is on him,
Trust thy friend ; prosperity makes him
Prouder in deed and bearing.

4.

In sudden reverses and shifts
Capricious Fortune delights ;
Soon wither her fairest gifts,
Soon vanish her darkest spites.

A ceaseless coming and going,
A blending of joy and sorrow—
To-day rich blessing bestowing,
And filling with trouble to-morrow.

She changes pleasure to sadness,
Upraises the lowly condition—
Alike, in her mirth or her madness,
Abases the lofty ambition.

Her none can ever beguile,
Her none can ever embrace—
Delightful and winning the smile,
But dread is the frown of her face.

CHAPTER XIII.

MIRZA-SHAFFY AS CRITIC.

PARTLY for my own practice, partly in order to inspire the Wise Man of Gjändsha with more respect for the poets of the West, I frequently made attempts to translate songs from the German and English into the Tartar language.

These attempts were of importance to me in more than one respect. Setting aside their direct advantage, I will here regard them simply from an æsthetical point of view.

We have already seen that Mirza-Shaffy laid no special stress on a beautiful diction, on euphony and formal grace, if these were not united with intrinsic worth. He never, therefore, considered it a sufficient excuse, when in the case of poems whose contents did not particularly please him, or which, as very frequently happened, had no

contents at all, I extolled the beauty of language of the original. On the contrary, his remarks on the ideas and imagery of the poems I translated, not only always gave me material for meditation, but often enabled me to cast deep glances into the Oriental world of emotion and contemplation.

The superabundant sentimentality which plays so great a part in the German lyric, and has contributed not a little to our enervation and degeneracy, is as unknown as it is unintelligible to the poets of the East. These always strive after a real, comprehensible object; but in order to reach it, they set heaven and earth in motion. No figure lies too far for the poet, and no thought too high. The crescent is to him a golden horse-shoe wherewith the steed of his favourite hero is shod. The stars to him are golden nails wherewith the Lord has fastened heaven, that it may not fall down with longing for Selma. Cypresses and cedars are only planted in the grove to call to mind the shape of slender maidens. The weeping willow lets her green hair hang sorrowfully down into the water, because she is not

slender like Selma. The eyes of the beloved are suns that make all believers fire-worshippers. The sun itself is only a shining lyre, and its beams are golden strings, from which the Orient allures the sweetest harmonies in praise of earthly beauty and the might of love.

Let us now take up one of my papers from the School of Wisdom, and set forth by some examples **Mirza-Shaffy's judgment** concerning the poetry of the West.

A selection of little poems which I had translated from Göthe and Heine pleased him exceedingly. He was quite entranced with the song of Göthe: "Kennst du das Land," &c.; and with Heine's song of the "Fisherman," ending with the verse:—

"Mein Herz gleicht ganz dem Meere,
Hat Sturm und Ebb' und Fluth,
Und manche schöne Perle
In seiner Tiefe ruht."

"My heart is like the sea,
With storm, and ebb, and flow,
And many a beauteous pearl

More difficult was it to make him acquainted with the beauties of Schiller's poems. He came, however, to the acknowledgment that each of these poems contained in itself a good kernel, though we frequently had some trouble to shell the kernel from its golden envelopment. Where such difficulties occurred, an Armenian friend of ours, Herr Budatov, teacher of the Persian language in the Gymnasium of Tiflis, had to help me out. Budatov was master not only of the German, but, also, of the English and French languages, and took great delight himself in helping to array songs, from these languages, in Oriental dress.

In these exercises it became quite clear to us how much of the enjoyment of foreign poetry is lost even for the most gifted minds, where there is no knowledge of the soil whereon that poetry has grown, and, consequently, no perception of those finer allusions, without the appreciation of which the most exquisite verses are often wholly unintelligible.

Thus one day we endeavoured to translate the poem of Heine, where he says of the stars:—

“Sie sprechen eine Sprache,
Die ist so reich, so schön,
Doch keiner der Philologen
Kann diese Sprache verstehen!

Ich aber hab’ sie erlernt,
Und ich vergesse sie nicht—
Mir diene als Grammatik
Der Herzaallerliebsten Gesicht!”

“They speak an eloquent language,
So beautiful and grand,
Yet none of the wise Philologers
This language understand!

But I have learned the speech
That speaketh from above—
And O, my grammar was
The face of my heart’s best love!”

Budatov understood at once the wit of this poem, but our united powers were insufficient to give Mirza-Shaffy a conception of its meaning, since neither the Tartar nor the Persian language has a corresponding expression for what

we understand by "Philologen." We could only translate the word by *Dilbilar* (one learned in languages); but Mirza-Shaffy himself was such a *Dilbilar*, and how could the Wise Man of Gjändsha allow that others should understand the language of the stars better than he and his like?

Some of the songs of Thomas Moore and Lord Byron gave him great delight, and were intelligible to him without any commentary. A powerful impression was made upon him by the wondrously beautiful poem of the Rev. C. Wolfe, "Not a drum was heard," &c.

Not so well did it fare with Uhland and Geibel. I still remember translating from the latter a pretty song, which I have often heard since in Germany, and which always vividly reminds me of Mirza-Shaffy and his criticism. I mean the song, "Die stille Wasserrose," &c. :

"Up from the purple lake
The water-rose doth grow,
Its leaves they glitter and flash,
Its cup is white as snow.

The moon from the spangled heaven
Pours all her golden beams,
And the bosom of the water
With twinkling splendour gleams.

Around the gentle flower
Is gliding a snow-white swan,
He sings so sweetly, softly,
And gazes the flower upon.

—He sings so sweetly, softly,
His spirit is passing away ;
O flower, gentle flower !
Canst thou understand his lay ?”

Mirza-Shaffy shook his head, and pushed the song aside, with the words, “A silly swan !”

“Does not the song please thee?” I asked my teacher.

“The conclusion is unwise,” replied he; “what does the swan get by singing himself to death? He injures himself thereby, and benefits the rose in no way. I should have ended:—

He seizes it with his beak,
And carries it straight away !”

CHAPTER XIV.

SONGS FROM THE "BOOK OF WISDOM AND FOUNTAIN OF KNOWLEDGE" OF MIRZA-SHAFFY.

(CONTINUED.)

Lo ! this is wisdom's newest word,
Her latest declaration :
Ye shall no more, O sons of earth,
Transgress without occasion !

No sinner now shall favour find—
Apart from the temptation
Of rosy lips and shining eyes,
Sweet Beauty's fascination !

Each mouth that sins by kissing ill
Is under condemnation ;
A flood of real kisses is
The only expiation !

Come thou at mellow eventide,

And thou shalt welcome be—

Come thou at golden morning hour,

And I will welcome thee—

Come when thou wilt, and thou shalt find

A welcome still from me !

Drink wine ! it is my old decree,

And still I say drink wine !

Not Eden shows a fairer tree

Of wisdom than the vine !

When God the Lord had made the world,

He spake :—Here man shall reign !

His head with wit shall teem—his drink

With fire shall glow and shine !

This is the cause why Adam soon

From Paradise was driven ;

He could not dwell in Eden's land,

Since he refused its wine.

When all mankind was overwhelmed,
Save Noah and his house,
God said :—Thou art my servant true,
For thou hast loved the vine !

Behold the water-drinkers shall
In water-floods be drowned,
Whilst thou alone shalt float secure
Amid the roaring brine !

Mirza-Shaffy ! thy choice was clear
From such a twofold fate—
Thou'lt ne'er a water-monster be,
But thou hast chosen wine !

O fling back the tshadra * ! thy beauty reveal !
Does the flower of the garden its beauty conceal ?
Has God created the blooming flower,
To ravish the heart and embellish the bower,
And thee, O maiden, of love the queen,
To bloom in concealment, and fade unseen ?

* A veil covering the whole body.

O fling back the tshadra ! The world shall declare
It contains not a maiden so lovely and fair !
Thine eyes scatter sparkles that kindle the heart,
Thy rosy lips glow as they smilingly part ;
No veil should fall over the rapturous sight,
But the spangled veil of all-shrouding night !

O fling back the tshadra ! such beauty ne'er saw
In his Harem at Stamboul the great Padishah.
The long dark eyelash's silken hair
Never fringed two eyes so large and clear.
Then fling back the tshadra ! thy beauty shall be
A transport to men, a triumph to thee !

When the ring of youthful beauties
Circles in the moonlit night,
None do trip it like Hafiza,
With a step so soft and light !

How the short antri flutter,
And beneath, in red shalvari,
Whirl the buxom legs how lithely,
Like two fire-pillars bright !

Lo! beguiled the wise men tarry,
Full of rapture and of wonder,
As they late are reeling homeward,
Freshened by the wine-cup's might!

E'en the Mushtahid*, the pious,
With the short bow legs, declareth:
None so lovely as Hafiza,
Dances in the mellow light!

Yea, with this divine enchantment,
With Hafiza's dancing whirl,
All the faithful shall be seized,
Reeling round in rapt delight!

And whoever live divided
O'er the world in sects and schisms,
Here with us shall in revolving
Dance of harmony unite!

What a spectacle, O poet!
Should the church's ancient pillars,
Loosely wagging, be discovered
In the same revolving plight!

* High Priest of the Shi'ites.

The Thistle thus bespoke the Rose :

Why art thou not a weed ?

Then wouldst thou serve some useful end,

. On thee the ass might feed !

The Goose bespoke the Nightingale :

I wonder what 's the use

Of thee to man—why dost thou not

Die for him like a goose ?

The Worker to the Poet said :

Of what avail thy song ?

To labour turn thy hands, and speed

The right, and check the wrong !

Said I : O Worker, Thistle, Goose,

Your counsel wise preserve ;

Pursue ye all your proper paths,

Nor from your courses swerve !

Whilst one with hand of labour toils,

Another's songful breast

Pours out the lay, and both conspire

To make the glad world blest !

Mirza-Shaffy ! how lovely
Thy words of wisdom throng,
Thy lay is musical discourse,
And thy discourse a song !

Mirza-Shaffy ! be rational now,
And leave thy wonted unsteadiness—
Henceforth to weightier matters do thou
Apply thy versatile readiness.

This Mirza-Hadshi-Agassi* scan,
In the rank of grandees high placed—
Of late he was quite a common man,
As he now with orders is graced.

Then turn to the state thine eloquent wit,
That else might as well be mute—
Since the greatest lords in the council that sit
Are the greatest fools to boot !

* The Grand Vizier of Persia, a man become powerful by Russian influence, and standing entirely in Russian pay.

Said I : many others must surely be
Well fitted for such elevation—
Yet harder it might be to find for me
An adequate compensation.

Accordingly, show thou me a man
Who has in the council his seat,
In whom my spirit dwells, and who can
In singing with me compete :

And I'll leave my wonted unsteadiness,
Ay, leave my old predilection,
And give my versatile readiness
Forthwith another direction !

SONGS OF COMPLAINT.

Again fair Spring o'er the blooming land,
In flowery robe, walks soft and bland.

Once I loved to meet her, as one would meet
A friend, with a full bowl of wine in my hand.

Now I seek to shun her, among whose flowers,
On the brink of despair, forlorn I stand.

I have lost Zuléikha, the dream is o'er
Of bliss and beauty that fancy planned !

Than death a worse calamity
To mortal man is poverty !
It neither lets him live nor die.

The blossoming of life it chills,
The gifts of bounteous Heaven it spills,
Its frown the smiling pleasures fly !
The wisest boasts himself in vain,
It bends him down in common woe—
With bitter cares it racks the brain,
For one must live while here below.

It is the grave of poetry—
And forces us to serve their turn
Whom we would rather proudly spurn
Than bow before submissively.

Yet do not blame thy mortal lot,
Endure, and bravely wait the morrow—
Sorrow supporteth wisdom not,
But wisdom aye supporteth sorrow !

In love's delights forget thy woes,
In thy sweet songs that never fail—
And take a lesson from the rose,
A lesson from the nightingale !

Even the rose, the pride of flowers,
Without the rank soil cannot flourish—
And Bülbül, too, the joy of bowers,
Herself on crawling worms must nourish !

The Shah he has with his own hand
A manifesto written,
And all the race of Farzenland*
Is with amazement smitten.

“The word how fair, the sense how grand !”
Each heart aloud rejoices—
“God save the King of Farzenland !”
Resounds from thousand voices.

Mirza-Shaffy—behold him stand
Admiring the commotion—
Says he : Have they in Farzenland
Of kings so low a notion ?

* Persia. The Persians call themselves Farzi.

Are Farzian notions so profound
Of ruling and commanding,
That kings all Farzenland astound
Who write with understanding?

Mirza-Shaffy, sweet roving bee!
On the wing thou long hast been,
Sucking nectar and perfume
From the rose and jessamine,
Wandering from bloom to bloom;
Now return, no longer roam;
Now thy roving flight is o'er—
Return, with all thy honey store,
Home, to thy loved one, home!

END OF VOL. I.

Woodfall and Kinder, Printers, Angel Court, Skinner Street, London.

